



PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

REPORT OF DEBATES

Wednesday 24 May 2023

REVISED EDITION

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Wednesday 24 May 2023

The Speaker, **Mr Shelton**, took the Chair at 10 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People, and read Prayers.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mr SPEAKER - Honourable members, I welcome the grade 9 and years 11 and 12 students from the Launceston Christian School. Good morning everyone.

Members - Hear, hear.

QUESTIONS

St Helens Private Hospital - Effect of Closure

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.01 a.m.]

Claire Lowe served our community for more than two decades as a first responder and joins us in the Gallery today. Like so many veterans and emergency service workers, Ms Lowe received treatment for PTSD at the St Helens Private Hospital and, like so many new parents, accessed the support provided at the St Helens Mother and Baby Unit. She has explained it is certain the closure of the hospital will lead to 'an increase in suicidal ideation, anxiety and other symptoms of mental health'. She says that the pressure on the public health service is already at breaking point and the loss of 31 beds in the mental health ward and an eight-bed Mother and Baby Unit poses a critical and dangerous situation for those struggling with mental health issues within our community.

Ms Lowe has a question for you, Premier: where are you going to send first responders and veterans who are suffering in mental distress so that they can be in a safe place with specialised nurses, doctors and support staff?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I acknowledge Ms Lowe in the Gallery today and empathise with her circumstances and indeed lived experience.

Our Government is proactively planning to ensure Tasmanians can continue to access the right mental health services for their needs following the recent decision by Healthscope to close St Helens Private Hospital next month. I assure all Tasmanians of our focus on mental health, considerably since I became Tasmania's first Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing in 2019. From that time the focus has been on providing a more integrated mental health service, ensuring that we also invest in key areas across mental health and wellbeing and support in a bilateral way in terms of the federal and state governments' bilateral agreement around mental health.

Much of our focus is on suicidal ideation as well. Recently I held my first Premier's Council on the subject of suicide and mental health and wellbeing, and welcomed the contact with each of those individuals who have given up their time to provide their expertise to me as Premier moving forward.

Primarily the mental health facility at St Helens Private Hospital provided mental health, alcohol and drug inpatient and day services, and hosts a Mother and Baby Unit. I am advised the hospital has an average occupancy of 24 patients. While this is a commercial decision by Healthscope as a for-profit company, as I have expressed before, it is hugely disappointing and has understandably caused concern and distress for many Tasmanians.

Our Government is stepping in to ensure the community still has access to these important health services and to minimise any loss of continuity of support for individual Tasmanians who require that care and support. To achieve this we are working hard with Healthscope and our partners in the wider health system to explore all available options to manage the impact of this closure and to ensure the health system is ready to meet any additional demand for in hospital services.

I say to all Tasmanians who, quite rightly, have been under some concern and distress from the announcement by Healthscope about St Helens Private Hospital that we are working hard to ensure the continuity of services are maintained as best as practicable to support Tasmanians in need. When you look at the investments we are making in mental health, our Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service has some \$50 million investment when it comes to reforming and investing in CAMHS, which includes integration of services across the state -

Ms WHITE - Point of order, Mr Speaker, under Standing Order 45. Out of respect for the question asked by Ms Lowe I direct the Premier's attention to that, which is where do veterans and first responders go once St Helens Private Hospital closes? He has not provided an answer.

Mr SPEAKER - I can remind the Premier of Standing Order 45 and relevance. I was listening to his answer. Premier, if you could now wind up.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr Speaker. In terms of first responders and PTSD, our Government has led the reforms when it comes to recognition of PTSD and we are working with Healthscope and other service providers to maintain, as much as possible, continuity of service and care that patients need.

St Helens Private Hospital - Effect of Closure

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.08 a.m.]

It is disappointing that you do not know where veterans and first responders will be able to access mental health treatment once St Helens Private Hospital closes. Yesterday patients and health workers rallied outside your office to demand action to address the loss of 39 mental health beds that will occur when St Helens Private Hospital closes its doors next month. Speaker after speaker explained how this service saves lives every day and how both patients

and skilled dedicated staff will have nowhere to go when it closes. One of the most moving speeches was Maddison Cutler who said:

I'm not exaggerating when I say I'm completely and utterly terrified if my life will actually continue without these services. Give me the staff and other patients of St Helens a glimmer of hope and save our mental health services, because if you don't there is no exaggeration in saying that you will have blood on your hands.

You are also the Minister for Health and they want you to find a solution for the replacement of these beds. Will there be funding to replace all 39 beds in tomorrow's Budget or will there be money for a stadium and nothing to prevent the loss of critical mental health services?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, as I have already said, I empathise with the circumstances of individuals around Tasmania who require that continuity of care including Maddison, Ms Lowe.

St Helens Private Hospital has stated that the Tasmanian Government and St Helens Private Hospital are working together with the Hobart Clinic and other service providers to ensure the continuity of the services. The Tasmanian Government has announced the set-up of a three-bed Mother and Baby Unit in the Royal Hobart Hospital -

Ms White - Is it three or two?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Inpatient programs - for example, conversations are under way with the Hobart Clinic to increase its capacity.

Dr Woodruff - They cannot, there are 39 beds at St Helens.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I point to the Peacock Centre with its 12 beds.

Dr Woodruff - It does not provide those services.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, member for Franklin.

Mr ROCKLIFF - General psychiatry, other services are being collated and contact details for treating teams as well as patients are being developed. These are the words from St Helens Private Hospital. We are working in partnership in a very positive and constructive way with St Helens Private Hospital to maintain the continuity of care as best as practicable for patients who require the service. This is a private hospital decision by Healthscope, which we have said we are extremely disappointed about and very mindful of supporting all Tasmanians in need of continuative patient care. That will continue to be our focus.

Short Stay Accommodation - Effect on Rental Market

Ms O'CONNOR question to MINISTER for PLANNING, Mr FERGUSON

[10.12 a.m.]

Tasmania is the most savage, unaffordable rental market in the nation and we have the fastest growing rate of homelessness. Councils across the state acknowledge the harm whole-of-home short stay accommodation is causing to the communities and they want to act. As shown by a recent Planning Commission ruling, they cannot unless you let them, which you have so far refused to do.

Minister, in the middle of the state's rental crisis you operate your own Airbnb so perhaps it is no surprise then that you have made your dogged opposition of limits on short stay rentals abundantly clear. Given your clear vested pecuniary interest you really should not be the minister responsible for short stay, but at the very least you should not be voting in this place on this issue.

Will you, today, explain why you refuse to act on short stay to ease the rental crisis and commit to abstaining from any votes in parliament related to short stay rentals?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Clark for her question. I will deal with a false claim on a conflict of interest from the outset. That is a ridiculous accusation from the member. She has made the same accusation against the Premier. She obviously does not know what a conflict of interest is.

Allow me to explain: a conflict of interest is a situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity. Ms O'Connor has failed to make out any case whatsoever as to how that would apply here. Under the planning system all current short stay operators would have existing use rights and be able to continue to legitimately operate even if the planning rules were changed. I understand that to be your position. I understand that to be the Labor Party's position on this matter about new applications going forward. Changing the rules to ban new short stay operations, as you, Ms O'Connor and the Labor Party have suggested, would not affect the Premier or me in the slightest. You are playing grubby politics yet again here today. You are skilled at it but you have been exposed for your hypocrisy, and you are wrong. We have nothing at stake and therefore no conflict of interest.

To this serious matter of accommodation options here in Tasmania. The reason we have pressure on our housing in Tasmania is because you are not in power anymore. People were leaving the state in droves. Here is the point of order, Mr Speaker. Triggered.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker, Standing Order 45 on relevance. That is ridiculous. We built more homes than you in four years.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Ms O'Connor. Thank you. I will remind the minister of that. I thought it was very relevant. The first 30 seconds he talked about one issue, and then he spent about 10 seconds on the next one when you raised the point of order. I will allow the minister the appropriate amount of time to answer the question.

Ms O'CONNOR - Briefly on the point of order, Standing Order 45 to relevance. The minister made a false statement. I ask him to draw his attention to the question.

Mr SPEAKER - I will allow the minister to answer the question.

Mr FERGUSON - Sounds like a guilty conscience to me.

Under Labor and the Greens, there was no future for young Tasmanians in the state. They were leaving the state in droves. You put 10 000 people out of work and the unemployment rate peaked at eight per cent.

Ms O'Connor - We built more than 2500 homes. We built more homes in four years than you have in nine. Honestly.

Mr SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, order.

Mr FERGUSON - You look at the change that has occurred in the nine years since. We have actually created 56 000 more jobs in Tasmania. Our population has grown to 570 000 people. The old idea -

Ms O'Connor - We are asking you to talk about rents and short stay. Do you want to be relevant?

Mr SPEAKER - Ms O'Connor, order. You have asked the question. Please show some respect to the Planning minister and listen to the answer.

Mr FERGUSON - I get very passionate about the future for our people in our community because people are now coming here for work because there is work available. Businesses are telling us the biggest stress is they need more workers. Another big stress is housing. When people move to our state, they pack up their gear and they bring their family. They do not bring a house. We have to provide more opportunities for public and private housing in our state. That is exactly what we are doing.

That is a puerile question from the member for Clark and I reject the premise of the question.

Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Mr Speaker, that was offensive behaviour. The minister did not answer any part of the question about short stay and walks away when I take a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER - The minister has sat down.

Forestry Industry - Effect of Victorian Government Budget Decision

Mr TUCKER question to MINISTER for RESOURCES, Mr ELLIS

[10.17 a.m.]

Joel Fitzgibbon, the CEO of AFPA has put out a media release about the Victorian Government closing down the forestry industry. He said:

The decision today by the Government of Victoria to accelerate the cessation of selective and sustainable native forest harvesting is an unnecessary surrender to environmental activists. It will result in even more hardwood being imported into Victoria from Tasmania and New South Wales.

We saw how bad the forestry deal was with Labor and the Greens. Noting the AFPA concerns, can you advise the House what impact the Victorian decision will have on the Tasmanian industry? Can you advise what the Government will do to sandbag wood supply in Tasmanian mills to support local businesses, jobs and contractors?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank my colleague, Mr Tucker, for the question. I know that he backs our sawmills. I know that he believes in the jobs in regional areas, just as our Government does.

What we saw last night in the Victorian Labor budget was one of the most disgraceful acts of betrayal I have ever seen against workers in Australia. Victoria will spend \$875 million to destroy regional jobs. That is money they could have been spending on public servants to look after the sick and to keep the community safe. That is money they could have been using to build schools and hospitals. Instead, what they have done is shut down a sustainable industry that has a bright future in this state and should have a bright future in that state, and put Victoria in a position where they will not be able to produce that timber.

Dan Andrews's betrayal of workers and businesses in Victoria is nothing short of a disgrace.

In Tasmania we have seen similar things from a Labor-Greens government when they tried to shut down the forest industry and locked up half the land that was available for timber in Tasmania. They used taxpayers' money to destroy regional jobs and could not fund the services that Tasmanians rely on.

We will never go down that path. I have to say it was very disturbing to see that you do not even need to have a Labor-Greens minority government in this country to see native forestry destroyed. All you need now is a Labor government, whether it is Victoria with Dan Andrews or Mark McGowan in Western Australia. In fact, they are playing copycat. Dan Andrews brought his ban on native forestry forward six years -

Mr TUCKER - Point of order, Mr Speaker. The question was asking the minister what he is going to do for the Tasmanian industry.

Mr ELLIS - Directly to that, I believe we have some serious opportunities in this state to grow wood supply and certainty for the industry, because what this represents is an outstanding opportunity for Tasmania. We will never see a lack of demand for our outstanding timber products going into the future. We are a state that will be able to supply the needs of our state and the country as well. Tasmania's beautiful hardwood timbers and special species already attract a premium. I have to say, in a country that will be more and more reliant on imports from overseas, the Tasmanian product, Tasmanian grown, Australian grown, will only see increasing demand. What that means for our industry is more jobs and opportunities. I think that also means it is an opportunity for this parliament - and I am very interested in this - to grow our capacity to supply even more timber.

We will work with our crossbench colleagues. I know he backs the industry. There are some big opportunities around our wood bank and how we can do more to back this sustainable industry that manages so much of our state and so much of our land mass for a range of different values, whether it is climate change and being a carbon store, whether it is fire management and making sure that we can protect our communities and our assets, or whether we are delivering beautiful Tasmanian timbers to the mill door.

Mr Speaker, we have some extraordinary opportunities. I am looking forward to working with the member and potentially those on the other side. If they want to see more timber grown in Australia, if they want to see more timber milled in Australia, if they want to see more opportunities for young Tasmanians, there is plenty we can do in this parliament. I look forward to bringing it on.

AFL Team - Location of High-Performance Centre

Ms JOHNSTON question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.23 a.m.]

The media is reporting that Gill McLachlan and the AFL are eyeing off the recreation ground at Cornelian Bay for the trading and administration facility, which would include a 9000 m² indoor training centre, a gym and recovery area, locker, office and admin rooms, a player lounge and dining area, and a training oval the same size as the playing field at the MCG, as required by the deal you have signed. This would take up almost the entirety of Cornelian Bay.

Cornelian Bay is used by art groups, volunteer dog walkers, Sunday informal cricketers, the South Asian Indian volleyball community, multicultural communities and touch football groups, just to name a few. It is used for personal fitness and mums and dads flying kites with kids or having a kick of the footy. It is also important green space for local social housing residents and community members. It is one of the only recreational grounds in Hobart that is not exclusively leased to a club or league. Instead, it is used and enjoyed by everyone.

This space is unique and is highly valued by the local community. It is not Gill McLachlan's or the AFL's. The community is worried they are going to lose their precious community space. Will you pick up the phone to Gill and his crew and tell them to take their grubby mitts off this community space at Cornelian Bay?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. There has been an options analysis undertaken when it comes to the location to the high-performance centre, some \$70 million of investment to support the AFL team, and no decision has been made on a location at this particular point, Ms Johnston; I will be very clear about that. Community of interest will most certainly be part of the discussion and any decision that may well be made in the future of where the high-performance centre is.

I look forward to continuing to progress our own AFL team that has been hard fought for for many decades. I was pleased to announce that on 3 May this year. There was a lot of

excitement generated across Tasmania; a lot of excitement amongst communities across rural and regional Tasmania and families and young people.

The key question, of course, is still for the Leader of the Opposition, who was also called out today in a *Mercury* editorial. She is still sitting on the fence, unable to -

Ms White - Have you got a shortlist of sites for the training and administration facility?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - make a decision. No leadership, no fortitude, no courage and a desire to undermine many decades of work, advocacy, and will kill off the aspirations of our young people here in Tasmania. We will have none of that. We very much believe in our AFL team and AFLW team not only for the economic wealth they will generate, but for our young people. We are not into self-interested political games. We are looking after the future generations of young Tasmanians.

Investment in Critical Health Services

Mr YOUNG question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.27 a.m.]

Can you update the House on how the Rockliff Liberal Government reflects the priorities of the Tasmanian people by investing in critical health services?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, health has been and continues to be a key priority for the Tasmanian Government. Incidentally, I welcome the Launceston Christian School to see democracy in action here this morning in question time. I hope you enjoy proceedings and engage with members of parliament and learn about the people's House representing the community's views.

Health continues to be a top priority for this Tasmanian Government. The Treasurer in his Budget preview has announced that over the next four years, Health and Education will account for 60 per cent of the Budget expenditure. Year on year, our Government is building on our significant investment into Health. That is because we have a strong budget and a strong economy to allow us to fund those essential services. Last year, there was record funding of some \$11.2 billion over the forward Estimates for Health. That is some \$7.25 million spent every single day on average.

It is our Government, for example, that established Tasmania's first integrated medical search and rescue helicopter service, which is resulting in quicker response times and saving lives. It is worth noting that it was Labor who promised this service to Tasmanians but broke that promise. As I mentioned yesterday, tomorrow's Budget commits \$15 million for the construction of a new helipad at the Launceston General Hospital. The new rooftop location will allow for the construction of a new state-of-the-art contemporary helipad that provides efficient patient transfer to the emergency department, ICU and theatres.

Regarding elective surgery, there is \$196 million spending over the four years and our clinician-led, patient-focused plan is delivering results and seeing elective surgery waiting lists decreasing month by month, particularly when you look at those 12-month figures are continually coming down between 12 and 16 per cent.

Our Government has employed 1400 extra nurses, 390 extra doctors, 310 extra allied health professionals and 220 extra paramedics and dispatch officers. Contrast that with those opposite when they were last in government and sacked a nurse a day for nine months. I say that because that is what will happen with a Labor government. We only have to look across Bass Strait and see what is happening in Victoria at the moment with 4000 public servants sacked, closing down a native forest industry and paying \$875 million to pay out people's jobs. That is what you will get under a Labor government. You will get that, you will constrict the economy and you will get less ability to fund those essential services that we know Tasmanians care about.

Ms White - What we have right now is a minority Liberal Government that cannot focus on health or housing because you are too busy talking about a stadium.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Around the state almost every week you will see our Government building up and upgrading modern state-of-the-art health infrastructure and putting in place new innovative health services. I have mentioned CAHMS, the PACER program, Hospital in the Home, and COVID@homeplus. They are all innovations created under our Government that allows and takes pressure off the acute care system. Tomorrow's budget continues that course, with funding to make 97 ambulance employees permanent to meet the demand post-COVID.

Ms White - Imagine if you had sacked 97 employees of the Ambulance Service. I cannot believe you even contemplated it.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Leader of the Opposition. I will not keep asking you to stop interjecting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We will deliver an additional 22 000 endoscopy procedures, \$38 million worth of investment, coupled with our nation-leading allied health scholarship program.

Our aim is to build a world-class health system. That is exactly what we are doing. We are also increasing confidence in our community by growing our economy, supporting businesses, supporting our foresters, our miners, our salmon producers, our famers - all the people that generate that wealth to ensure that that wealth is flowing out throughout our community. We can fund essential services, as we have been doing, and increase investments into those critical services, such as nurses and doctors, allied health professionals and state-of-the-art infrastructure in health, right across Tasmania.

St Helens Private Hospital - Effect of Closure

Ms DOW question to MINISTER for HEALTH, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.33 a.m.]

The ANMF state secretary, Emily Shepherd, has highlighted the enormous impact the closure of St Helens will have on the availability of inpatient mental health services in Tasmania. She has said that -

If you do nothing, the total number of mental health beds in Tasmania will fall overnight by 50 per cent, which not only be a disaster for patients but will push an already overstretched public service to the brink.

How can you let the number of mental health beds fall by half while doubling the number of stadiums in Hobart? Does this not show, once again, that you have your priorities all wrong?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I have checked the premise of the question. What a ridiculous question. This is what will happen if this lot get the Treasury benches. No more investment in infrastructure. The member for Bass says that now is not the time to invest in infrastructure. No investment in schools, no investment in hospitals, and no investment in roads. This is what you will get with a Labor government - a record debt, cutting the public service -

Opposition members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Members on my left, order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - record debt, shutting down wealth-generating industries.

Ms Finlay - What are you going to do for those patients?

Mr SPEAKER - Member for Bass, order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are working with St Helens Private Hospital. The Hobart Clinic is in discussions with private psychiatrists and the Department of Health about the transition of inpatient and day programs from St Helens Private Hospital to their centres in the Hobart CBD and Rokeby.

We acknowledge that some of the patients who would normally receive inpatient treatment and care at St Helens will not necessarily have the level of acuity typically seen in public inpatient services as St Helens is not a gazetted facility. Their needs and preferences regarding their treatment and care may be better provided for within alternative subacute or community-based environments such as the newly opened 12-bed Peacock Centre and the Hobart Clinic Mental Health Hospital in the Home, Detox at Home and other settings.

I welcome Clarity Health Care, which has just opened in Battery Point, to provide new mental health services in the south. We are working extremely hard on what is a very challenging and difficult situation. We are committed to supporting the physical and mental

health of all Tasmanians. We have made significant reforms, significant investments, particularly over the past four years, understanding that emergency service work can lead to post-traumatic stress disorders and other mental health illnesses.

Over the term of this Government we have introduced nation-leading resumptive PTSD legislation and removed step-down workers compensation provisions for police officers. These initiatives have provided invaluable support to our emergency service workers when they need it most. We are proud of what we have done in this area. By making supports more accessible, it is natural that there has been an increase in workers compensation claims. This also means police officers and other emergency service responders are more aware of their wellbeing needs and are coming forward to get the help that they need.

We have committed \$3 million per annum to support a groundbreaking health and wellbeing program that provides a mix of proactive, preventive and intervention methods 24/7. We will not be like those opposite, scaring the community, playing politics. We will be sitting down in a very measured way, in a very patient-care-focused way to work through these challenges in the best interests of patient care and patient safety.

South East Traffic Solution - Delays

Mr O'BYRNE question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr FERGUSON

[10.38 a.m.]

As a part of your Government's self-described South East Traffic Solution your Government promised to upgrade the Tasman Highway to a dual carriageway between the Hobart Airport flyover and the Midway Point causeway. Five years on from this announcement motorists are still converging into one lane just past the airport, which is causing significant travel delays and frustrations to the communities.

Six months ago, when you were asked about when this chokepoint would be widened, you said construction would begin this month with completion by 2024. I understand due to your Government's incompetence the design, planning and approvals process has collapsed and you will now have to start again from scratch, which will delay this important upgrade further. This could mean up to four years of traffic converging into a single lane past the airport flyover, which is now already causing costly delays.

Do you admit that this much-needed upgrade, first promised in 2018, has been delayed by several years because of your stuff-up? When will you accept responsibility for this failure?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to talk about our infrastructure plans for south-east Tasmania. They are innovative. It leaves in the dust the former minister, who did nothing for that important corridor. We have delivered incredible outcomes on the Tasman Highway as part of the South East Traffic Solution. I appreciate that Mr O'Byrne has had little to complain about in relation to those projects. Mr O'Byrne worked hard to egg on the legal challenges to the airport interchange project. That is on him. We built that infrastructure despite Mr O'Byrne's very sneaky and manipulative style of trying to undermine that project.

but we got on and built it anyway, without your support, through you, Mr Speaker, to Mr O'Byrne.

It is a joint state/federal initiative. The projects have already begun to provide benefits and when completed will transform average commute times between Sorell and Hobart as well as delivering safety and productivity benefits. Nearly \$350 million of joint investment between our two governments, Tasmanian and Australian, have been locked in against those projects. It is an unprecedented investment for the communities of Sorell, the southern beaches, the Tasman Peninsula and the lower east coast.

The next projects to complete the suite of projects will be the duplication of the highway from the airport to the Midway Point causeway and then the very significant task of duplicating both causeways, including a second bridge on the Midway Point causeway.

The design and planning work done by my department has been exemplary. They should be congratulated, not pilloried by Mr O'Byrne. They are competent, hardworking and qualified people. They cannot do it alone; they get the benefit of consultants which Dr Broad would be slashing of course, if he would ever produce an alternative budget.

There are environmental challenges in relation to both the highway from the interchange through to the first causeway. Mr O'Byrne did not mention the word 'environment' in his question.

Mr O'Byrne - They have been there since 2018.

Mr FERGUSON - Welcome to the table, Mr O'Byrne. Why did you not do something about it, Mr O'Byrne when you were minister? We need to work through those issues. Standing before you today, Mr O'Byrne, I can do many things but I cannot change federal legislation around the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. It does need to be observed.

Mr O'Byrne - You knew that in December last year.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, member for Franklin.

Mr FERGUSON - I sense your discomfort, Mr O'Byrne.

Environmental investigations and designs are progressing on the Midway and Sorell causeway duplications as I am advised the causeways traverse sensitive marine and Aboriginal heritage environments. The approvals process will be complex and lengthy, which will affect project delivery time frames - that is to be very frank about that. We will work through it as we always do. That is what a good government should do. I can recall a particular challenge at Eaglehawk Neck. We had some of the same challenges and I made it very clear -

Ms O'Connor - We helped you with that.

Mr FERGUSON - You did. To your credit you raised it with an interest in those issues. As I say today, we will work through those issues with our professionals' commitment to the project, finding goodwill and finding a way to achieve those things.

Mr O'Byrne - Why have you treated the landowners like rubbish for the 18 months?

Mr SPEAKER - Order, member for Franklin.

Mr FERGUSON - We are leaving Mr O'Byrne in the dust. I said it once before: in this space Mr O'Byrne did not just achieve nothing, he achieved absolutely nothing.

The people of those communities are getting transport and traffic relief as a result of those innovations and investments that are working. The former minister who is now the Premier, Mr Rockliff, duplicated the number of lanes around the airport roundabout as an interim measure. That provided relief.

Mr O'Byrne interjecting.

Mr FERGUSON - You could have done that in a few months and you did nothing, I say to you, Mr O'Byrne.

We then built the proper interchange. Look at the Sorell bypass working beautifully. The overtaking lane on the Arthur Highway is working really well. We are now completing the set by duplicating the causeways and the Tasman Highway. I have not had time to mention the upgrade of the Tasman Bridge which is a passion project of our Government.

I conclude my answer by saying we will work through those issues.

Macquarie Point Stadium Proposal - RSL Tasmania Congress

Ms BUTLER question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.44 a.m.]

You have said on numerous occasions you would engage in a very respectful way with the veteran community about your proposal for a stadium at Macquarie Point. On Sunday RSL Tasmania's congress voted overwhelmingly to protect the Cenotaph. They believe you have failed after nearly a year to provide them with any information about the likely impact on the Cenotaph beyond misleading diagrams, which you also leaked to the *Mercury*. Your Minister for Veterans' Affairs left the congress before the stadium vote was held. How are you going to get the veteran community onboard with your stadium when you continue to treat them so disrespectfully?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Lyons for her question.

We have been and we will continue to engage respectfully with the RSL and associated veterans' community. I did appreciate the time when the RSL executive officer, the president and I recently walked the site of the Cenotaph to get an understanding of their concerns and also of their aspiration. This is an opportunity for the RSL to add value to what is a magnificent site and a place for reflection. It is a place where we can acknowledge our past and present veterans, men and women, for the contribution that they have made to our country, including the ultimate sacrifice. Not only on Remembrance Day or 25 April, Anzac Day, but every day,

we have the opportunity to reflect, to thank and to pay tribute to our very brave men and women who have fought for our country.

That is why we will continue to engage with the RSL, talk about any potential impacts on the site and also opportunities for enhancing the Cenotaph to not only maintain but increase the opportunity for a very important place for reflection, remembrance and importantly, appreciation for the service that many thousands of men and women have given to our country.

Budget 2023-24

Mr WOOD question to TREASURER, Mr FERGUSON

[10.47 a.m.]

How will the upcoming Budget build Tasmania's future to be strong, safe and secure and an economy that is delivering for all Tasmanians.

Ms O'Connor - Boring. What a boring question. Typical DD.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, member for Bass, Mr Wood, for his question. Far from being boring, it is exciting when you can support the future aspirations of the people of our state, and that is exactly what tomorrow's Budget is all about. It is about building our future. It is about building Tasmania's future so it can be strong, so it can be safe and so it can be secure. What a way of life we enjoy and tomorrow's Budget will make it even better.

With the number of Tasmanians now in work at 291 000 people employed, that is a record high. That is the high watermark. At 3.8 per cent unemployment, that is the lowest unemployment percentage on record since records were commenced and that is with a higher population and higher participation. Our strategy is all about harnessing the momentum that we have been generating since 2014. The disastrous economic period under Labor and the Greens when they held office has been well described already today

The Budget will continue to focus on what matters to Tasmanians. The Premier and I have been very clear. Tasmanians' priorities are our priorities - health, education, housing and building infrastructure. Now is the time to continue to build significant infrastructure. That is how you create and perpetuate jobs and provide a strong pipeline of work and confidence. That is what building and industry are looking for more generally.

We understand because we are working with our communities. We understand the pressures. They are real. Inflation has been a very heavy weight on the households of the people of this country, and that includes in Tasmania. The highest inflation in decades has been accompanied by very high interest rates through central fiscal policy, which has affected our families, as have world events. They are beyond our control but we can provide support.

That is why tomorrow's Budget will provide significant investment. Increased investment into concessions, direct subsidies to lower people's bills with more than \$347 million to support vulnerable Tasmanians in meeting the cost of water and sewerage,

electricity and council rates. Last year I said it would be \$305 million, this year, \$347 million. A very large increase - water and sewerage, electricity bills, council rates. I am pleased that we are able to do this in the context not of a receding economy but a growing economy. Our economy has rebounded strongly since we were walloped by the pandemic. We have emerged very strongly and we need to build upon those gains. The Budget will also ensure that we continue to lead the nation on economic performance.

We are the only Liberal Government in Australia at the helm. Tasmania is once again leading the nation on our economic performance according to CommSec's recent State of the States report, which usually gets a groan from Dr Broad. The strong result again shows that this Government's plan for our state is actually working for Tasmanian families and businesses, despite the challenges that we need to continue to work through. Our record of job creation now speaks for itself.

In contrast, the former government got rid of 10 000 jobs in that time. We have worked with industry and business so that 56 000 more Tasmanians are able to be in work and, as the Premier said yesterday, 140 700 women, the highest number of women employed in our history. It is a real testament to our plan and how it is contributing to economic strength and stability.

I will mention very briefly the Victorian Labor budget. They are not in a pandemic but they are still going to wallop their economy. They are going to ratchet up taxes, sack thousands of people and ransack an industry that the Tasmanian Labor government did in the native forest sector as well. I want to send a message that Tasmania is open for business to any Victorian businesses that want to relocate here to a more pro-business environment. Bring your investment here with a lower taxing environment and a greater belief in the importance of enterprise and risk.

In tomorrow's Budget my colleagues in this House will see that it will deliver on these competitive strengths. As I conclude, the big standing question is will Dr Broad be like his leader, who continues to sit on the fence in relation to a stadium? Will Dr Broad deliver an alternative budget in the days after tomorrow? We will present our budget papers. I suspect the Greens might present their alternative vision. I look forward to knowing if Dr Broad is able to deliver his \$2.4 billion public wages plan in his alternative budget. I will be looking forward to see if all of those things that get a mention in their media releases about what a Labor government would do but there is never a dollar amount. We look forward to seeing if they will be costed and delivered in an alternative plan but we do not think there will be an alternative budget, but even in that absence we are delivering for our state.

We appreciate the support we have received already and the business community and the Tasmanian community can look forward to a Budget that builds on their future.

Salmon Industry

Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[10.53 a.m.]

You are a corporate pushover and everyone knows it. You folded to Gill McLachlan and now the Brazilian butchers jailed for industrial-scale corruption are lining up to get everything

their family wants. Joesley Batista testified to bribing nearly 2000 Brazilian politicians, calling it 'the rule of the game', and saying, 'What's most important is corruption in the highest office'.

At your cosy Liberal Party donor dinner last year, you promised JBS and Cooke you would do everything global salmon wanted, even though you said it would not be popular. It is payday for the Batista's Liberal Party donation. Nephew Henry, who is in charge of their Tasmanian investment portfolio, has lashed our laws as time-consuming and expensive. They want to plunder on their own terms.

Are you going to roll over and sell out our marine environment, just like you have sold out people who are desperate for a home?

Ms O'Connor - Good question. Are you going to rewrite the rules for corrupt global corporations?

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I reject that question. That question is an insult.

Dr Woodruff - Which part of it? You have never rejected the fact that the Liberal Party dinner happened in the past.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We will be making decisions in the best interests of all Tasmanians, absolutely, as we said yesterday, and we have done that over the course of the last nine years. That is why we have record low unemployment. That is why we have more people in work than ever before. That is why we have more women participating in our workforce than ever before. That is why when we deliver our Budget tomorrow we will not be raising taxes like they are doing in Victoria and shutting down a native forest industry.

What we will always continue to do is value our resource-based sectors unashamedly, whether that be salmon, forestry, farmers and fishers or indeed our miners, and we will not listen to your rubbish.

We have a salmon industry with a production value of some \$1 billion, making it the single biggest primary industry in the state with some 2000 permanent and casual employees statewide.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. If members wish to have a discussion around the Chamber, you can go outside; otherwise you will listen to the answer that the Premier is giving.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have produced a salmon plan for the future that allows for industry growth and is centred on innovation, continuous improvement and world-leading practices. One of the four key principles underpinning our salmon plan is to ensure world's best practice through continuous improvement when it comes to regulation and transparency and the

introduction of contemporary environmental standards for marine finfish farming that will further strengthen the current regulatory system when it comes to environment regulations.

Ms O'Connor - That's not what they want.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are about balance. We are about growth. We are about ensuring we have regulations that maintain and strengthen environmental regulation and builds community confidence in our salmon industry. We are proud of the industry.

Dr Woodruff interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I know that you want it shut down, like you want native forestry shut down as well.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. The House will come to order. The Premier has an opportunity to answer that question. It was asked in good faith and it should be listened to in good faith. The Premier has his views. Other people might have other views but this is not the time to chatter across the Chamber.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We will always support the growth of our resource-based industries, our mining, our forestry, our fishers, and our agriculture, unashamedly.

Dr Woodruff - They'll get everything they want. You can't stand up to the bullies.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Dr Woodruff, why is it so difficult to understand the premise that people can have different views? You do not have to interject on the Premier. It is against the Standing Orders. If you do it again, I will ask you to leave.

Macquarie Point Stadium Proposal - RSL Tasmania Congress

Ms BUTLER question to MINISTER for VETERANS' AFFAIRS, Mr BARNETT

[10.59 a.m.]

It is clear that the Premier sees his stadium project as a higher priority than the respectful wishes of thousands of Tasmanian veterans. On ABC radio, RSL Tasmania CEO John Hardy outlined the reasons why 80 per cent of Tasmanian veterans are opposed to the stadium. He said:

We don't believe it is a good spot for a stadium. No way would you be able to build this in Melbourne by the Shrine. There is no way this would be accepted in Canberra by the Unnamed Soldier. These are things that I think most people would understand.

Minister, you spent Anzac Day in France, at Villers-Bretonneux. Can you imagine a stadium being built right beside that powerful and sacred memorial? Can you not see why Tasmania veterans are so offended by your stadium plan? Will you, as Minister for Veterans Affairs, stand up for our returned service men and women?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, it is clear from my track record that I stand up and support our veterans and their families. I do not think I need to go into that.

The Premier has answered this question already, at least in part regarding the importance of the Cenotaph. The Hobart Cenotaph is one of the most beautiful cenotaphs in Australia. I have visited many in my time. The consultation and engagement with RSL Tasmania and other ex-serving organisations is ongoing.

RSL Tasmania received a briefing from Kim Evans and my department on the Saturday on the early concept work for the stadium, following our commitment to keep them fully informed of that work. It is very important work. It does not reflect the design but it does provide information via consultation, including with the RSL. RSL Tasmania and its delegates at the conference made a decision and that is noted.

The ongoing consultation will continue and it is in two parts, as the Premier outlined. First is understanding and being informed more about the plans for the stadium, particularly in how we can enhance the experience at the Cenotaph for our veterans and their families, and all Tasmanians. We have 17 500 veterans in Tasmania and we want them to have an experience at the Cenotaph that will be enhanced. That is why we will continue to work with the veteran community, RSL Tasmania and other ex-serving organisations. We look forward to that ongoing engagement, as I have had and the Premier has had with president Barry Quinn and CEO John Hardy a few months ago. That consultation and information will be on going.

I look forward to continuing to stand up and support our veterans community. We are committed to do so.

Glen Dhu Pool - Delay in Redevelopment

Mrs ALEXANDER question to MINISTER for EDUCATION, CHILDREN and YOUTH, Mr JAENSCH

[11.03 a.m.]

During the 2021 election campaign, former premier Peter Gutwein announced a Liberal Government promise that it would redevelop the Glen Dhu pool in Launceston. I recognise it is of quite significant interest to my colleagues in Bass and Labor as well. The Government committed an initial \$1.5 million for the project. In the 2022-23 state Budget there was another \$1.95 million, taking the total to \$3.45 million.

Was the original estimate incorrect, or was the project later amended? COVID-19 was the initial reason why the pool was closed. We are now talking about the importance of physical exercise for children and young people, but the Government is dragging its feet in prioritising capital works designed to engage young people in healthy exercise and activity.

We all cheered as Ariarne Titmus achieved her Olympic records, creating quite an exuberance and expectation for other young people in Launceston to achieve similar dreams. Where are we at with this project? When is it going to be opened? What will be the final cost?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Bass for her question. She is correct, that as part of the 2022-23 state Budget the Tasmanian Government increased the total funding to upgrade the Glen Dhu pool from \$1.5 million to \$3.45 million. I am advised that project architects have been appointed and master planning, including assessment of building and workplace health and safety compliance, is progressing.

The swimming and water safety programs that were formerly conducted at the pool continue to be delivered for students through the use of other facilities in the region. These arrangements will continue until the upgrade of the pool is completed.

Education is the single most powerful driver for improving economic and social outcomes in Tasmania, including health, life expectancy, happiness and productivity aspects. We are strengthening that future with record funding for education, skills and training in our budgets, currently \$8.5 billion over the forward Estimates, with current allocations for capital works totalling \$250 million over the forward Estimates, including \$69.7 million in this financial year.

We will have more to say on our capital works program in the Budget. I look forward to providing updates to Mrs Alexander and others on the progress with the Glen Dhu project.

Housing Australia Future Fund Bill - Support of Federal Liberal Party

Ms HADDAD question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.06 a.m.]

When you first became Premier, in your first statement to the media, you spoke passionately about how every Tasmanian has the fundamental right to a roof over their head. Since then, the housing waitlist and average times to be housed have both continued to soar. This week, Nathan shared his story about waiting more than four years with chronic health conditions and chronic pain without a safe place to call home. Last week, Samantha shared her story - that is a de-identified name. She left a violent relationship with her three kids expecting there would be help on the other side, that her fundamental right to have a roof over her head would be met. Instead she has spent six months sleeping in a garage and has now moved to a tent. One of her children has recently had serious brain surgery, returning from hospital to sleep in a tent.

These are the changes that we have seen after nearly 10 years of Liberal Government. The biggest opportunity to dramatically increase the supply, on the table right now, is the federal Labor Government's Housing Australia Future Fund Bill. That bill would see an additional \$500 million injected into social and affordable housing every year and dramatically increase construction around the nation, including in Tasmania.

What pressure are you putting on your federal Liberal colleagues to support the bill?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for Clark for her question. I acknowledge her advocacy. The reason why the minister for Housing and our Government are working so hard when it comes to investing in affordable and public housing is because of the people that are vulnerable in our community. Vulnerable men, aged men, vulnerable women and children are clearly our focus. Our most vulnerable need emergency shelter and assistance now. We are also investing \$38 million on wraparound services to ensure those who need help now are getting the services they need, including funding on 17 existing specialist homelessness services such as Housing Connect Front Door and Housing Support, crisis shelters and supported accommodation.

We have committed \$7 million a year to extend our three safe space services and outreach support for homeless Tasmanians through to 2026, providing funding certainty to keep this service running. We also increased the safe space beds in Launceston to now be a total of 88 beds a night across the state of Tasmania.

We are expanding our shelters in support of accommodation, we are building new ones. We have nearly doubled the capacity of Launceston Women's Shelter, which we opened in February this year. We have expanded our youth foyer in Launceston, Thyne House. It opened in January this year. We are building new youth shelters and foyers in Hobart and Burnie that are due for completion later this year. We are building a new Devonport men's shelter, a new Bethlehem House in Hobart, and expanding McCombe House for women and children in Hobart. These all add up to some 105 new units of homeless accommodation by 30 June 2023.

Ms HADDAD - Point of order, Mr Speaker, Standing Order 45 to relevance. The question was whether the Premier is putting pressure on his federal colleagues to support the federal Labor Housing Australia Future Fund Bill.

Mr SPEAKER - I can only remind the Premier of Standing Order 45 in relevance to the question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Collaboration is critical to achieving better housing outcomes for Tasmanians. We are always willing to engage in a constructive way with the federal government. I know our minister for Housing, Mr Barnett, has a very constructive relationship with Ms Collins. Together we will deliver, as we are delivering our responsibilities as a state government.

Housing Challenges

Mr YOUNG question to MINISTER for STATE DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION and HOUSING, Mr BARNETT

[11.11 a.m.]

Can you update the House on how the Rockliff Liberal Government is addressing Tasmania's housing challenges?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for his question, his special interest in housing, his time with me and the Premier just a few weeks ago at Rokeby promoting more housing for vulnerable older men. It was a great day. I thank Centacare for their initiative and work with St Joseph Affordable Homes.

The housing market is tight in Tasmania and it is impacting access to safe, affordable and reliable homes for Tasmanians. We have a strong plan. The most critical thing to do in terms of housing affordability is to build more homes faster. To increase supply.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - There is interjection after interjection from state Labor.

I am happy to advise that there is a lot of hot air in Canberra and we are doing the heavy lifting in Tasmania. They have not delivered in Canberra and it is about time they did.

Ms Haddad - How about you pick the phone up to your federal colleagues who are blocking the bill?

Mr SPEAKER - Order

Mr BARNETT - We are doing the heavy lifting. We are building the houses faster. What are you doing about it? State Labor opposed our reforms. You opposed our reforms.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order. Members are aware that that was disorderly. The House will come to order. The minister has the call.

Mr BARNETT - They do not like the facts and we have a very bold plan, Mr Speaker.

Ms Haddad - It would dramatically increase supply and you know it.

Mr SPEAKER - Ms Haddad, interject anymore and you will be asked to leave.

Mr BARNETT - We have a \$1.5 billion plan for 10 000 homes between now and 2032 and we need innovative and flexible ideas. We have created the Youth2Independence facilities for young people aged 18 to 24 and the Wintringham specialist accommodation for older vulnerable Tasmanians.

We have a record of innovation but we need to do more. We are leading the nation as the most cohesive housing model in the country, something that both Labor and the Greens opposed. We did the reforms and you both opposed it.

Homes Tasmania, the capital program, is delivering on that, and we hope to achieve 1500 homes by 30 June this year. We are rolling out a \$50 million modular construction initiative to deliver 200 homes over the coming years. Innovation, flexibility.

Ms Butler - Why are you opposed to more houses? What will happen when you do not deliver those homes?

Mr SPEAKER - Member for Lyons, order.

Mr BARNETT - Despite the unparliamentary interjections, I will continue.

We have also introduced measures to support supply, and the support program, through ancillary dwellings through the residential land rebates through the Private Rental Incentives Program, supporting rental affordability in the private sector. We started that in 2018.

We have already supported 514 eligible families to access private rental at an affordable rent. We will be building on this existing program with our history of innovation to trial a further program of housing support for Tasmanians. We know one of the biggest housing challenges Tasmanians face is finding a home to rent that is affordable.

A new affordable rentals initiative in the state Budget will secure private rentals at market rates which will then be provided to eligible Tasmanians at a reduced rent. This initiative is designed to attract many more private landlords to make their properties available for eligible families to live in an affordable rate. It is another example of how this Government is looking at all possible ways to relieve the challenging circumstances some Tasmanians are facing as they look for a home for their families.

Members interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - Despite the rude interjections from Labor and the Greens who are not interested in our innovative solutions to housing affordability, I will conclude.

Additional incentives and pathways for Homes Tasmania to work with the private sector to increase the supply of affordable rentals for eligible households and to ease the cost of living for those who need it is our objective. We have been doing it this week with energy relief. The Treasurer has outlined the support for further affordable support for those in need across Tasmania. It has been indexed; it is in the Budget.

We are adding to that and today I am announcing that new initiative; we are looking at trying new ways and different opportunities to support Tasmanians in need to provide that safe caring community that we all support.

Minority Government - Compromises

Ms WHITE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.17 a.m.]

Yesterday, during his contribution to the no confidence debate, the Independent member for Lyons, Mr Tucker, said your Government needed a 'sharp course correction'. He said he was going to ensure:

Those who feel they have been overlooked in the rush to what is called a progressive future have a voice inside your minority Government.

Mr Tucker said:

This includes people with traditional conservative values and those with strong religious views, as well as traditionalists who place equal rights on citizenship about the demands for race-based division in the Constitution.

What compromises are you going to be forced to make to hold onto your premiership and keep this minority Liberal Government limping along?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I listened intently to the member's contribution yesterday. We all have an absolute right to come to this place, the House of Assembly, the people's assembly, to express our views. However, when it comes to my values, which are well known after 21 years in this parliament, I will never compromise what I believe in.

Advanced Manufacturing Accelerating Growth Grant Program

Mr WOOD question to MINISTER for ADVANCED MANUFACTURING and DEFENCE INDUSTRIES, Ms OGILVIE

[11.19 a.m.]

Can you update the House on the successful completion of the Advanced Manufacturing Accelerating Growth Grant program?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I thank Mr Wood for the question. It is a great question. Our manufacturing sector is one of the largest private sector contributors to gross state product, generating over \$2 billion. It is a sector that directly employs more than 18 000 people and our manufacturers have a global reputation for innovation, design and excellence. It is great for brand Tasmania.

The Rockliff Liberal Government understands the importance of investing in success. With the completion of the fourth and final round of our Advanced Manufacturing Accelerating Growth program we have seen over \$12 million of investment generated, a return on investment of almost \$4 million for every dollar we have put in. This program has encouraged

Tasmania's innovative advanced manufacturers to invest in equipment to support growth into new markets or expand current ones both nationally and internationally.

The program has supported 34 businesses in total and today I am pleased to announce that 11 successful recipients in this latest round will receive almost \$870 000 in funding. The successful recipients are based right across the state, representing diverse businesses working in food production, engineering, equipment manufacturing and precision machining, with more than half of them located in regional areas. The latest round of funding alone is expected to generate almost \$2.7 million in total investment and more than a 3:1 return on our outlay. It is also anticipated to generate more than 33 FTE new manufacturing jobs locally. This is a great outcome for these businesses, their communities and our towns.

I was very fortunate to visit Definium Technologies, one of the successful recipients who are based in the state's north, and tour their wonderful facility. Like all of the successful recipients, Definium is an innovative Tasmanian business which has global reach. They specialise in the design, manufacture and assembly of custom electronic hardware and software solutions manufactured right here in Tasmania in their Launceston facility. I saw them manufacturing their circuit boards. It was quite remarkable, and I know they do business in Silicon Valley so I am all about Definium.

Definium is one of the very many businesses who are being supported to invest in growing their futures right here in Tasmania and as the Treasurer has said, there should be more of them. Perhaps we will get some businesses from Victoria that want to come here as well and we would be very welcoming of that. I extend my congratulations to all of the successful recipients of this latest round and across the program as a whole, which has been a big success.

Time expired.

TABLED PAPERS

Questions on Notice - Answers

The following answers to Questions on Notice were tabled:

No. 23 of 2022 - REVITALISING LOCAL HOSPITALITY VENUES GRANT PROGRAM

Ms White to Minister for Hospitality and Events, Mr Street

See Appendix 1 on page 121.

No. 21 of 2023 - TASMANIAN STATE SERVICE - STAFF IDENTIFYING AS ABORIGINAL

Ms O'Byrne to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Jaensch

See Appendix 2 on page 129.

**No. 12 of 2022 - DEPARTMENT OF POLICE, FIRE AND EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT - JOB VACANCIES AND VACANCY MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE**

Ms O'Byrne to Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management, Mr Ellis

See Appendix 3 on page 130.

MESSAGES FROM LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Committees - Appointment of Members

The following message was received from the Legislative Council:

Mr Speaker,

The Legislative Council has made the following committee appointment as a consequence of the Legislative Council election held on 6 May 2023:

Chair of Committees (Ms Forrest) to serve on the Joint House Committee.”

Signed C. M. FARRELL

President

23 May 2023

The following further message was received from the Legislative Council:

Mr Speaker,

The Legislative Council has made the following appointments to Committees as a consequence of the Legislative Council elections held on 6 May 2023:

Ms Forrest to serve on the Joint Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts, the Joint Library Committee, the Joint Gender and Equality Committee, and the Joint Workplace Culture Oversight Committee;

Ms Armitage to serve on the Joint Parliamentary Standing Committee on Integrity and Joint Library Committee;

Ms Lovell to serve on the Joint Workplace Culture Oversight Committee.

Signed C. M. FARRELL

President

23 May 2023

Coronation of King Charles III - Resolution

The following further message was received from the Legislative Council:

Mr Speaker,

The Legislative Council has agreed to the following Resolution communicated to it by the House of Assembly on 9 May 2023:

Resolved - That the following Address be presented to His Majesty the King through Her Excellency the Governor:

TO HIS MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY, THE KING:

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

We, the Members of the Legislative Council and the House of Assembly of the Parliament of Tasmania, in union with Your Majesty's subjects throughout Tasmania, desire to express our devoted loyalty and attachment to Your Majesties.

On the auspicious occasion of the Coronation of Your Majesties we humbly beg to express an earnest hope that Your reign may be a long and prosperous one, and fraught with happiness to your Majesties and to all your peoples throughout the Commonwealth.

And has filled up the blank with the words 'Legislative Council and the'.

Signed C. M. FARRELL
President
23 May 2023

JUSTICE AND RELATED LEGISLATION MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS BILL 2022 (No. 43)

Bill returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

Motion by **Mr Street** that the Message be taken into consideration at a later hour.

TASMANIAN PUBLIC FINANCE CORPORATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023 (No. 8)

First Reading

Bill presented by Mr Ferguson and read the first time.

MOTION

Attendance of Legislative Council Members for Budget Proceedings

[11.27 a.m.]

Mr STREET (Franklin - Leader of the House)(by leave) - Mr Speaker, I move:

That the House of Assembly requests that:

- (1) All Members of the Legislative Council attend in the House of Assembly Chamber following the First reading of the Appropriation Bills (No. 1 and No. 2) 2023 for the purpose of listening to the speech by the Treasurer in relation to the Tasmanian Budget 2023-24.
- (2) The Legislative Council give leave to the Honourable the Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence to appear before, and give evidence to, the relevant Estimates Committee of the House of Assembly in relation to the Budget Estimates and related documents.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Appropriation Bills (No. 1 and No. 2) 2023 - Precedence of Government Business

Mr STREET (Franklin - Leader of the House)(by leave) - Mr Speaker, I move:

That Government Business take precedence from such time as the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2023 and the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2023 are introduced, until the House has dealt with all business associated with the Budget.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

Appropriation Bills (No. 1 and No. 2) 2023 - Allotment of Time for Debate and Establishment of Estimates Committees

Mr STREET (Franklin - Leader of the House)(by leave) - Mr Speaker, I move:

That -

- (a) all stages of the Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2023 and the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2023 shall have allotted a maximum total of 97 hours as follows:
- (i) up to the Second Reading: Maximum 16 hours;
 - (ii) in the Estimates Committees: Maximum 63 hours; and
 - (iii) in Committee of the whole House and Third reading: Maximum 18 hours;
- (b) on the Second reading, the Premier, the Treasurer and the Leader of the Opposition have unlimited speaking time and other Members speak for not longer than 30 minutes each;
- (c) when the Appropriation Bills (No. 1 and No. 2) 2023 have been read the Second time in the House of Assembly, the Bills be referred to Estimates Committees A and B of the House of Assembly.

Such Committees may not vote on, but may examine and report upon the proposed expenditures contained in the Bills by no later than 20 June 2023, with such expenditures being considered on an output by output basis, including Grants, Subsidies and Loans and the Capital Investment Program.

The following Ministerial portfolio units are allocated to House of Assembly Estimates Committee A:

Date	Minister
<u>Monday, 5 June</u> 0900 - 1200 Premier (3 hours) 1200 - 1230 Minister for Tourism (½ hour) 1230 - 1300 Minister for Trade (½ hour) 1400 - 1900 Minister for Health (5 hours) 1900 - 2000 Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing (1 hour)	Hon. Jeremy Rockliff MP
<u>Tuesday, 6 June</u> 0900 - 1200 Minister for Infrastructure and Transport (3 hours) 1200 - 1300 Treasurer (1 hour) 1400 - 1630 Treasurer cont. (2.5 hours) 1630 - 1800 Minister for Planning (1.5 hours)	Hon. Michael Ferguson MP

<u>Wednesday, 7 June</u> 0900 - 1000 Minister for Community Services and Development (1 hour) 1000 - 1130 Minister for Local Government (1½ hours) 1130 - 1200 Minister for Hospitality and Events (½ hour) 1200 - 1330 Minister for Sport and Recreation (1½ hours) 1430 - 1730 Minister for Primary Industries and Water (3 hours) 1730 - 1830 Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence (1 hour) 1830 - 1930 Minister for Women (1 hour) 1930 - 2030 Minister for Disability Services (1 hour)	Hon. Nic Street MP Hon. Jo Palmer MLC
<u>Thursday, 8 June</u> 0900 - 1200 Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management (3 hours) 1200 - 1300 Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth (1 hour) 1400 - 1600 Minister for Resources (2 hours)	Hon. Felix Ellis MP

House of Assembly Estimates Committee B:

Date	Minister
<u>Monday, 5 June</u> 0900 - 1100 Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (2 hours) 1100 - 1330 Minister for Corrections and Rehabilitation (2½ hours) 1430 - 1530 Minister for Workplace Safety and Consumer Affairs (1 hour) 1530 - 1600 Minister for the Arts (½ hour)	Hon. Elise Archer MP

<p>Tuesday, 6 June</p> <p>0900 - 1200 Minister for Energy and Renewables (3 hours)</p> <p>1200 - 1300 Minister for State Development, Construction and Housing (1 hour)</p> <p>1400 – 1600 Minister for State Development, Construction and Housing cont. (2 hours)</p> <p>1600 - 1630 Minister for Veterans Affairs (½ hour)</p>	<p>Hon. Guy Barnett MP</p>
<p>Wednesday, 7 June</p> <p>0900 - 1200 Minister for Education, Children and Youth (3 hours)</p> <p>1200 - 1300 Minister for Environment and Climate Change (1 hour)</p> <p>1400 - 1500 Minister for Environment and Climate Change cont. (1 hour)</p> <p>1500 - 1600 Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (1 hour)</p> <p>1600 - 1800 Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth (2 hours)</p>	<p>Hon. Roger Jaensch MP</p>
<p>Thursday, 8 June</p> <p>0900 - 1200 Minister for Racing (3 hours)</p> <p>1200 - 1300 Minister for Heritage (1 hour)</p> <p>1400 - 1700 Minister for Science and Technology (3 hours)</p> <p>1700 - 1730 Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries (½ hour)</p> <p>1730 - 1800 Minister for Small Business (½ hour)</p>	<p>Hon. Madeleine Ogilvie MP</p>

MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES - HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES

(1) Estimates Committee A consists of the following Members:

The Chair of Committees (Chair);
Mr Young (Deputy-Chair);
One member nominated by the Leader of the Opposition; and
Ms O'Connor.

- (2) Estimates Committee B consists of the following Members:

Mrs Alexander (Chair);
Mr Wood (Deputy-Chair);
One member nominated by the Leader of the Opposition; and
Dr Woodruff.

- (3) Members of the House who have not been appointed as Members of the Committee may participate in proceedings by asking questions, but not more than two in succession; and may not vote, move any motion or be counted for the purposes of a quorum.
- (4) The Chair of a Committee has a deliberative and a casting vote.
- (5) During sittings, substitute Members may be allowed.
- (6) If a vacancy occurs in the membership of a Committee, the Speaker may nominate a Member in substitution, but in so doing has regard to the composition of the Committee as appointed by the House.
- (7) A Committee may proceed with business despite a vacancy in its membership.
- (8) The quorum of a Committee is a majority of the Committee.
- (9) If at any time a quorum is not present, the Chair will suspend proceedings of the Committee until a quorum is present or adjourn the Committee.
- (10) Any time lost for lack of a quorum shall be added to the time allocated to that session.

SITTING TIMES

- (1) Each Estimates Committee meets only in accordance with the abovementioned time-table adopted by the House or as varied by the Chair.
- (2) Estimates Committees may sit only when the House is not sitting.

OPEN HEARINGS

All hearings of the Estimates Committees are open to the public.

PROCEEDINGS OF AN ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

- (1) Consideration of proposed expenditures in an Estimates Committee follows as far as possible the procedure observed in a Committee of the whole House.

- (2) A Committee will consider expenditures on an output by output basis, including Grants, Subsidies and Loans and the Capital Investment Program.
- (3) A Committee may ask for explanations from a Minister relating to the outputs.
- (4) The Minister who is asked for explanations may be assisted where necessary by officers in the provision of factual information.
- (5) Officers may answer questions at the request of the Minister but shall not be required to comment on policy matters.
- (6) Time limits of one minute for a question and three minutes for an answer shall apply in Estimates Committees.
- (7) Questions may be asked on a ratio of three Opposition, one Green and one Government, or in such form as the Committee determines.
- (8) A Minister may advise an Estimates Committee that an answer to a question, or part of a question, asked of the Minister will be given later to the Committee, where possible that Committee sitting day.
- (9) A Minister may provide additional information to a Committee about an answer given by or for the Minister.
- (10) Additional information -
 - (a) is to be written;
 - (b) is to be given by a time decided by the Committee; and
 - (c) may be included in a volume of additional information laid on the Table of the House by the Committee.
- (11) If any Member persistently disrupts the business of an Estimates Committee, the Chair -
 - (a) names the Member;
 - (b) if the Member named is a Member of the Estimates Committee, suspends the sitting of the Estimates Committee until the Chair has reported the offence to the Speaker; and
 - (c) if the Member named is not a Member of the Estimates Committee, orders that Member's withdrawal from the sitting of the Committee until the Chair has reported the offence to the Speaker;

as soon as practicable, the Chair advises the Speaker who then gives notice that the Member of the Estimates Committee be replaced.

- (12) If any objection is taken to a ruling or decision of the Chair -
- (a) the objection must be taken at once and stated in writing;
 - (b) the Chair, as soon as practicable, advises the Speaker who makes a ruling on the matter; and
 - (c) the Estimates Committee may continue to meet but may not further examine the output then under consideration.
- (13) Television coverage will be allowed, subject to the same conditions that apply to televising of the House of Assembly.

HANSARD REPORT

An unedited transcript of Estimates Committee proceedings is to be circulated, in a manner similar to that used for the House Hansard, as soon as practicable after the Committee's proceedings.

REPORTS OF ESTIMATES COMMITTEES

- (1) A report of an Estimates Committee is presented by the Chair or Deputy Chair of that Committee to a Committee of the whole House, such reports containing any resolution or expression of opinion of that Committee.
- (2) When the reports of the Estimates Committees are presented they may be taken into consideration at once or at a future time.
- (3) The following time limit applies to consideration of reports of Estimates Committees on each portfolio unit on the question "That the proposed expenditures be agreed to and that the resolutions or expressions of opinion agreed to by the Committees in relation to those expenditures be noted."
 - One Minister, the Leader of the Opposition or Member deputised by the Leader - 20 minutes, any other Member - 10 minutes.
 - A maximum period for consideration of 2 hours for each Minister.
- (4) When the consideration of reports of Estimates Committees A and B has been completed, the question is proposed and put forthwith without debate "That the remainder of the Bills be agreed to."
- (5) When the Bills have been agreed to by the House, the Third reading of each Bill may be taken into consideration at once or made an order of the day for the next sitting day.

[11.29 a.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I acknowledge that Mr Street and his office have been very helpful in the discussion of how Estimates and the timetable, in particular, will run this year. We appreciate the engagement and the ability to set a schedule that is in line with what the Government can actually deliver and also with the portfolios that we need to scrutinise. As I said last year, it does not mean that some portfolios are not as important as others. It just means that we believe that some will require additional scrutiny. Of course, we have not seen the Budget so we do the best we can based on what we know at the moment.

It is important that Estimates is able to proceed so that on behalf of Tasmanians, the Opposition, Greens and the crossbench can appropriately and properly dissect the Budget and understand what the Government is actually up to. It is much harder for ministers to dodge questions in Estimates. We often do not receive answers to questions during question time but it is much more difficult for them to dodge questions within the atmosphere of the committee. That is why it is important that we are able to do our work.

I note that in the motion as circulated by the Leader of Government Business that the Chairs of the committees will both be Independents. I suspect that is the first time for a long time. Mr Tucker and Mrs Alexander are chairing these committees. We hope it will be a good sign that the members asking questions will be given a fair go and that ministers will be kept relevant to the questions that are being asked and that they will answer questions as fully and as properly as possible.

As I said at the start, I appreciate the willingness of the Government to engage with us and with other members of this place.

There is one amendment that I wish to move and I will read the amendment. I believe it has been distributed.

Ms O'Connor - No, it is has not which is reasonably poor form.

Mr WINTER - I will explain, Ms O'Connor. I asked for assistance during question time to draft the amendment. It is not a very complicated, Ms O'Connor, but hopefully you will bear with me.

I move the following amendment -

Under the heading "Proceedings of an Estimates Committee" in paragraph (10):

Leave out paragraph (b).

Insert instead:

(b) "is to be provided to the Committee by no later than 5 p.m. Monday, 19 June 2023".

The purpose of this amendment is to deal with an issue that we found last year and, I believe, a couple of years prior to that: that questions on notice from ministers were not provided back to the House before report back. We found that frustrating in portfolios when

we had asked critical questions and it was important for us to understand but we did not receive the answers until after we had done the report back.

This amendment requires ministers to provide the requested information to the House so that during report back we can discuss what the answer was as it pertained to the portfolio and to the Budget this year. At the very minimum, a minister on Thursday is going to have 10 days to provide his question on notice.

It is not a particularly onerous request but it is a request that ministers have not been able to adhere to. We think 10 days is more than adequate. We do not think it is an unreasonable request to ask of the Government. I hope that members will support this. I do not think it is an unreasonable request. I think it adds to the transparency of this Government. What we have discussed many times this week is having some transparency around questions that are asked by members on behalf of constituents and stakeholders.

I hope that members will be able to support the amendment.

[11.33 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, the Greens will certainly be supporting this common-sense amendment. Many the time has been following Estimates when members who are asking questions have had them out on notice and they have come back after parliament has risen for the winter break. That is completely unacceptable and not transparent. This is not a tricky amendment. It is not an unreasonable amendment. It does pass the common-sense test and it would certainly allow for more transparency around information that is provided to the committee in a situation where a minister is not able to provide an answer directly at the table.

I thank Mr Winter for bringing forward this amendment. I note that today and yesterday there was a flurry of answers to questions on notice before we get into Estimates - questions that have sat on the Notice Paper for months and months. It is hard not to be cynical when you see that. I beg your pardon, Mr Jaensch.

Mr Jaensch - If you don't like it we can slow them down. You are complaining that we are answering the questions.

Ms O'CONNOR - No, Mr Jaensch, please try not to put words into my mouth or misrepresent what I am saying. You may not have been listening to what I said. Questions on notice, which should be answered within 15 sitting days, sometimes sit on the Notice Paper for months. Then this week there is a little flurry of clearing out some of those questions on notice before we get to Estimates. It is an observation and it is a fact.

I agree with Mr Winter that Estimates provides a real opportunity to pursue a line of questioning and explore portfolio allocations and administration. It is harder for ministers not to answer the question but it is a matter of public record that they still manage to not answer questions. It has been that way since 2014. The whole Estimates process changed once the Hodgman Liberal government was elected and Mr Ferguson became the Leader of Government Business and applied a somewhat control-freaky lens to it. It has taken the life, in part, out of Estimates but it has also provided ministers with cover because it is such a rigid process now.

Yes, we want a fair go at the Estimates table because we have people, constituents and communities, whom we represent. It will be interesting to see how the chairs of the Estimates Committee manage the process as Independents. I am quite looking forward to observing and participating in it. We have had a history at Estimates tables since 2014 where the chairs run cover for ministers and then you have a duly placed backbencher who will ask a Dorothy Dixier in order to give some breathing space to a minister.

Mr Street - I take personal offence at that.

Ms O'CONNOR - I am sorry, Mr Street, if you take personal offence to that. I know you are just doing your job. I am sorry but it is true so I cannot really backtrack from that because it is a fact.

Mr Street - What do mean by 'run cover'?

Ms O'CONNOR - I encourage you to go back and have a look. Every partisan chair does - that is your job.

Have a look at some of the Estimates transcripts from before you people were in office. We had Labor chairs constantly running cover for Labor ministers. Former premier, Lara Giddings, as health minister, counted heavily on the chair to provide her cover, I remember, to great frustration. It is not particularly a reflection on you, Mr Street. It is just the practice. That said, having had a bit of whack at you, I also want to thank you for the efforts you have made in relation to this schedule to get some consensus across the parliament about the allocations of time. Thank you for that.

Mr Jaensch - Better now?

Ms O'CONNOR - What? Pardon?

Mr Jaensch - You were trying to recover your relationship with Mr Street after insulting him.

Ms O'CONNOR - I believe Mr Street, in his particular role, does need to be able to communicate across the Chamber. It requires a deft and inclusive touch which was missing, I think, for a long time before that.

Mr Jaensch - You are overdoing it now.

Ms O'CONNOR - I am sorry, Mr Street, that the conversation has devolved in this way. That said, we are very comfortable supporting this amendment. It should have already been in the order because members who put questions on notice should have them before parliament rises for the best part of six weeks.

[11.39 a.m.]

Mr STREET (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Mr Speaker, I will be brief. The Government is not going to support the insertion of a date by amendment. We are simply not comfortable hardwiring in a date with no knowledge of what is going to be asked at the table.

What I do acknowledge is that we have changed the schedule this year to allow a sitting week gap after Estimates before we come back for the reporting phase so there will be 10 days not three days for questions on notice answers to be provided.

Ms O'Connor - That is why you should support the amendment.

Mr STREET - You were talking about a sign of goodwill and the fact that my office reached out and worked with both sides on the Estimates schedule. Give us this opportunity with the changed schedule this year to answer the questions on notice before we come back for that last sitting week to the best of our ability. We will look at it again next year if -

Ms O'Connor - Ten days.

Mr STREET - Please keep us to it. The commitment I made is now on *Hansard*. Give us this opportunity with the new schedule to answer the questions on notice in the time frame that you are talking about and we will see.

[11.40 a.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I am a bit surprised the Government could not acquiesce to the - I will sit down.

Mr SPEAKER - The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided -

AYES 14

Mrs Alexander
Dr Broad
Ms Butler
Ms Dow
Ms Finlay (Teller)
Ms Haddad
Ms Johnston
Mr O'Byrne
Ms O'Byrne
Ms O'Connor
Mr Tucker
Ms White
Mr Winter
Dr Woodruff

NOES 12

Ms Archer
Mr Barnett
Mr Ellis
Mr Ferguson
Mr Jaensch
Ms Ogilvie
Mr Rockliff
Mr Street
Mr Wood (Teller)
Mr Young

Amendment agreed to.

Mr WINTER (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, that was an important vote for transparency. Tasmanians were promised more transparency by our two new Independents. Although it was a small amendment it will be substantial. We will act to provide additional transparency to this place. We have seen the Government lose its first vote and we have seen the parliament acting in a way that is more transparent than we have seen from this Government in many years.

The Government has been using its number to protect itself from scrutiny, to protect itself from questions that are important to Tasmanians and to this place. For the first time, we will have questions come back to us on time, when we can scrutinise what the answer was. Ministers cannot use questions on notice as a shield for themselves and not provide the answer until after they have been properly scrutinised.

We have seen this used before by ministers. Only a few weeks ago Ms Ogilvie took questions on notice from the Legislative Council short inquiry into racing, using the questions on notice mechanism so that she did not need to answer questions about whether or not she had been at the races. One would hope that someone like Ms Ogilvie, in a circumstance like that, could come back to the House within 10 days and tell us whether or not she had been to the races. One hopes that this will not be too onerous for ministers like Ms Ogilvie to come back and provide this type of answer. It speaks to the sort of behaviour we have seen from ministers, particularly from Ms Ogilvie, which has led to the defection of two of the Government's members.

It is the behaviour of Ms Ogilvie that has put the Government in the mess it is in today.

Ms Ogilvie interjecting.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, minister.

Mr WINTER - Members can pretend that these issues are personal. They can pretend that it is about them. It is actually just about holding ministers to account. It does not matter to me which minister is misleading or is not providing answers to the questions that we ask. I just want all ministers to answer questions and be held accountable by this place. That is why we moved the amendment. This is about every minister upholding the standards of this place.

The amendment we have just seen is important. It will add to the transparency of this place. We have seen the two Independents do what they told Tasmanians they will do and they have shown they are going to be independent. This is a good move for the parliament. As I said, I am surprised the Government did not support it anyway. It is not an onerous requirement or request of the House of government to answer questions within 10 days of being put on notice, but it is something that I hope will help. I thank members for their support of the amendment.

[11.50 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, long live balance of power parliaments, because we have had a vote in here today which has tangibly increased the capacity for transparency. It is a sign, as Ms White was talking about yesterday, of the parliament behaving in a mature way. I thank Mr Tucker and Mrs Alexander for their vote to improve the process for getting back information before the winter break.

At the risk of sounding a little bit matronising, I will go there anyway. It strikes me that what is happening with the Government at the moment is an adjustment process of understanding that they are no longer in total control of this place, and I am sure they will keep adjusting.

Personally, Dr Woodruff and I find it offensive that the two Government backbenchers have four Dorothy Dix questions a day, so the Government backbench has a higher allocation

of questions than the Labor Party, the Independents and the Greens, per capita. That does not pass the reasonableness test, Mr Speaker.

Ms O'Byrne, who has an excellent attention to detail, has highlighted -

Ms O'Byrne - Some might say too attentive.

Ms O'CONNOR - Well, it helps in a job like this one. She has highlighted that there is an error in the Estimates schedule. I know there has been a conversation between Ms O'Byrne and Mr Street and a conversation between Mr Street and myself, but the schedule says that on Wednesday 7 June between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. minister Jaensch will answer questions as the Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth, who we know is minister Ellis. The absence in that line-up is the incredibly important to Tasmanians portfolio of Parks. I understand that Mr Street will contribute shortly and potentially move an amendment to the schedule. We are thankful that it is a mistake and not a deliberate effort not to have scrutiny of the Parks portfolio, which so many Tasmanians care about from across the voting spectrum and across the island. It is not a 'greenie' thing, it is a Tasmanian thing, loving our parks. Thanks, Ms O'Byrne, and thank you, Mr Street, for being so ready to fix this now.

[11.53 a.m.]

Mr FERGUSON (Bass - Treasurer) - Mr Speaker, while I am seeking some advice because I want to get the wording precisely correct, I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge that the Government is not bothered by the change that has been agreed to.

Opposition members interjecting.

Mr FERGUSON - Excuse me, I would like to be able to speak. The Government is not bothered by the change that has been brought in, but it is just that it was not our initiative and it came in at the last minute. Minister Street has made it really clear that our performance is very strong in responding as a government to questions taken on notice.

I want to let a few people know about some of the history. We are still waiting for some answers from when we were in opposition. They never arrived at any date. That is a fact. I remember that in last year's budget Estimates process, we had probably the highest and fastest return rate on answers.

Ms O'Connor - Except for minister Barnett.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr FERGUSON - I do not know about the individual details standing here right now, but I do know how hard our offices and departments work, because sometimes questions taken on notice have levels of detail. When the minister took the question in the first place, in some cases, that data was not even easily obtainable and it had to be, if you like, scrutinised and identified. That is a huge amount of work. Maybe some people who have not been ministers do not realise that but it is a lot of work for our departments. We are very comfortable answering questions in the way that has been described. I do not see it as a big issue. I thought minister Street's offer and assurance was very satisfactory. I make those points and also thank him for the hard work he does in his role.

Members who ask questions that are taken on notice, regardless of that change that has just been made, can be assured that we will continue the practice of responding as quickly as we are able to.

I am moving this amendment because if I do not minister Street would be closing the debate and may not be able to move it. To help the House, I move -

In the Table under Committee B:

Leave out 'Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth'

Insert instead 'Minister for Parks'.

I will also say in moving this amendment that the Clerk would have been able to make this as a Clerk's amendment anyway because self-evidently minister Jaensch is not Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth.

Mr SPEAKER - The amendment has been moved so we will speak on the amendment.

[11.56 a.m.]

Mr STREET (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Mr Speaker, I am only standing up to say mea culpa. The one thing I pride myself on is attention to detail and my adviser who helps me put the schedule together, who has just slinked into the adviser's box, is a perfectionist as well. Between the two of us putting it together we did not realise when we were copying and pasting it across from last year that with Jacquie Petrusma leaving and Felix coming in we have missed one of the cut-and-pastes and duplicated a portfolio.

Ms White - It is easy to do. There has been a lot of churn on your side.

Mr STREET - You cannot even be magnanimous while I am up here trying to humble myself, Ms White. It was an obvious mistake. As Mr Ferguson has pointed out, the Clerk could have fixed it but it is easier if we fix it now. I appreciate Ms O'Byrne bringing it to our attention.

Amendment agreed to.

[11.57 a.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Mr Speaker, I want to touch on the comments by minister Ferguson then that indicated he continually tries to rewrite history in this place. It is a wonderful art form for him. His argument that the Government has always responded in a timely way to questions on notice is palpably untrue. I know that when we were in government there was incredible pressure to make sure that before the Estimates report back was dealt with, we would have the answers provided that we took on notice and on the occasions when the data was too hard to get, which I accept on occasion can happen, there would be direct contact made explaining what the delay was and what the likely time frame for resolution of that would be.

What we have had is an entire week of Estimates report back, budget after budget, where we stand here and say, 'I would like to talk about this but the Government has failed to provide the answers'. I do not like it when minister Ferguson gets up and rewrites history. The only

reason we have moved this amendment is because this Government has failed to be transparent and provide things in a timely way.

This is a good resolution and I am pleased to see the House has supported it.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mr SPEAKER - Honourable members, I welcome the years 11 and 12 Legal Studies students from Guilford Young College. Welcome to the Gallery.

Members - Hear, hear.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Health

[11.59 a.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That the House take note of the following matter: health.

I am pleased to stand and speak on this important matter of public importance. I could not be more assured about the importance of bringing this forth today, given the Premier's inability to answer really important questions about this matter during question time today and this is a serious matter when it comes to health. I want to speak of the closure of St Helen's Hospital, which is not very far away. It is clear today that the Premier cannot answer questions directly about what will happen, what services will be provided for those Tasmanians who have relied on those services for years. Nor could he answer questions directly to constituents, to Claire Lowe, who sat in the parliament today as we shared her story. She served our community for over two decades as a first responder and shared her experience of having PTSD but also of having benefited from the many services that are available at St Helens Private Hospital, including the Mother and Baby Unit.

The beds at St Helen's have been, in a way, propping up the public mental health beds across the state. There has now been a failure in the provision of that service. It is not clear what the Government is going to do to support those Tasmanians in need. There are not just private beds, there are dedicated public beds that are used and highly valued by Tasmanians. Access to specialised TMS therapy will be significantly reduced once St Helen's closes. The mental health service is already overstretched, whether that be in an acute inpatient setting or whether that be community-based care.

We know through Estimates last year there was a shortfall of 300 workers across the mental health sector. Some serious issues need to be resolved when it comes to providing better services for Tasmanians who are suffering with poor mental health. There is a bit of history to this and I want refer back to an AMA report from last November. It is a public

hospital report card and refers to the number of specialised mental health public hospital beds across Tasmania. It says:

The biggest reduction in mental health beds in public hospitals in Australia happened in Tasmania where the number of beds reduced from 251 in 1992-93 to 103 in 2019-20. Tasmania reduced its public hospital mental health beds by almost two-thirds and this could be one potential explanation as to why Tasmania has the longest emergency department stay time for mental health patients triaged for admission who can wait up to 28 hours to be admitted.

That is disgraceful but it is a really important point to this issue. This Government has failed to deliver better mental health services for Tasmanians. Each day we come in here and ask about the funding commitment for the Launceston General Hospital. Mental health beds are a really important part of that development. We have a 20-year plan in the north west for the Spencer unit, which currently is not in a great state. It desperately requires upgrades with significant staff shortages.

Premier, I was not able to be at the rally yesterday but I would have been there if could. I would have stood with those patients and health care workers, who are incredibly concerned about what is going to happen when the hospital closes.

Premier, when did you find out that the hospital was going to close? You still have not answered that question. I would like you to address that today. You have announced the three beds to replace the Mother and Baby Unit at the Royal Hobart Hospital. It is not clear whether that is three beds or two beds. I would like you to clarify that as well. I want to read into the *Hansard* an excerpt from an email that I received. What it says is really important because it presents an opportunity to us and to the Tasmanian community. This person says:

Although I am terribly saddened by the imminent closure of St Helen's I do feel a small glimmer of optimism that we can build new and innovative services in perinatal and infant mental health. Recognising the needs of not just the mother-baby tie but also a whole-family approach to supporting mental health. These services are not needed just in Hobart but across the state and urgent planning is required to implement a quality service that would be evidence-based, progressive, welcoming and equitable to all Tasmanian families who need it.

That is what we want to see from you, Premier. We want to see a short-term transitional plan that applies to those services right now, those 39 mental health beds. When that facility closes it will cause a 50 per cent reduction in mental health beds, the ANMF said. You have failed to clearly articulate a plan to make sure that Tasmanians can have ongoing access and continuity of care, which you refer to as being so important for those people once St Helen's closes.

The other important point I want to make is regarding the Mother and Baby Unit and the need to have a long-term plan, a community based model. I have met with general practitioners and nurses involved in providing care at St Helen's in the Mother and Baby Unit. They are devastated that the service is going to be diminished. It is a very different clinical setting. It is very welcoming. That same clinical setting will not be achieved at the Royal Hobart Hospital

as part of a ward. It is not clear how those other beds and services will be accessed on the paediatric ward when our acute care setting is already just so overworked and compromised. Now you are going to put more pressure on them by not having a plan to address this.

You failed to answer Claire's question about what happens to those people who have suffered from PTSD, first responders, veterans. Where do they go? You have the opportunity to answer that now on the public record, Premier. I implore you to do that and I implore you to outline your Government's plans to replace these valuable services.

Time expired.

[12.06 p.m.]

Mr ROCKLIFF (Braddon - Minister for Health) - Mr Speaker, I thank the member for bringing forward the matter of public importance. Our Government, Healthscope and other providers are working collaboratively to minimise the impact on patients once Healthscope St Helens Private Hospital in Hobart shuts its doors in five weeks, as disappointing as that decision is. We have already announced we will establish a new public Mother and Baby Unit at the Royal Hobart Hospital and see the continuation of this important service and leave no gap in demand for mothers experiencing mental health distress, such as post-natal depression and anxiety.

Other services offered by St Helens Private Hospital will be absorbed by private providers to ensure that patients can continue to receive treatment. When I talk about the Mother and Baby Unit, that is in addition to existing supports available throughout perinatal infant mental health services and child health and parenting services.

We are working with two private health providers, including the Hobart Clinic, to establish a transcranial magnetic stimulation, TMS, service within the public system. The Hobart Clinic is also working with private psychiatrists and the Tasmanian Department of Health about the transition of inpatient and day programs from St Helen's Private Hospital to their centres in Hobart CBD and Rokeby. ECT services will continue to be provided through the Hobart Day Surgery, with patients under the care of the Hobart Clinic. The capacity of these services will be expanded to match any increase in demand.

Our primary focus is to minimise the impact on patients and ensure seamless care for those who are currently using these services. Following the opening of the Peacock Centre, which includes 12 inpatient beds, a further six mental health inpatient beds are available at the Royal Hobart Hospital if required. Clarity Health Care last week opened its doors and commenced its Mind Care Choices program, which is the equivalent of approximately 20 virtual beds. This program will reduce the average length of stay in hospital and reduce readmission rates for inpatients. Our new St Johns Park facility in New Town will deliver a further 27 beds once completed. The Department of Health is working closely with affected staff who expressed interest in joining the Tasmanian Health Service following the closure. It is fast-tracking the employment of staff.

I assure the Tasmanian community that we are working to ensure patients continue to have access to the right mental health care and treatment for their needs in both the short and long term. We are working collaboratively across the public and private services to ensure services currently offered are continued. We are committed to keeping the Tasmanian community informed about the progress of our plan to ensure uninterrupted services, and we

will provide regular updates as necessary. We are investing more than \$7.25 million, on average, every single day in our health system.

As I said this morning, since coming to Government we have employed: 2300 additional health professionals; 1390 additional nurses; 390 additional doctors; 310 additional allied health professionals; 220 additional paramedics and dispatch officers. In fact, for the 12 months between June 2021 and June 2022, Tasmania's registered health workforce increased by some 4.5 per cent - the highest growth of all Australian jurisdictions.

I have mentioned our clinically-led, patient-centred, four-year elective surgery plan which will deliver some additional 30 000 elective surgeries and endoscopies over the four-year period. I mentioned in the state of the state Address some 20 000 additional endoscopies, at an investment of some \$38 million.

During the past 12 months to the end of March 2023 the elective surgery wait list fell by 1226 people, or 12.6 per cent, which is positive. Importantly, those waiting more than the clinically-recommended time frame has decreased by some 21 per cent. Once again, compared this to those opposite - who cut elective surgery funding across the state and put beds in storage - our Government's record is a very proud one.

We are also innovating. We have plans and we are enacting very good, innovative reforms across the health system - PACER; secondary triage; community paramedics; Community Rapid Response Service, to name a few.

The professionalism of our staff and the hard work of our team kept people safe and well during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as having nation-leading vaccination rates. Also, COVID@home - providing professional care and treatment in a patient's home -from its commencement until April this year there have been more than 35 000 enrolments, which is tremendous, Mr Speaker. Innovation, investment and action are the hallmarks of our time in Government, and we will always understand and act upon Tasmania's number one priority, which is health.

Mr Speaker, before I finish I would like to acknowledge National Palliative Care Week, which is the annual campaign dedicated to raising awareness of palliative care and celebrating the people, services and communities that provide quality care day in, day out. This campaign is about empowering Tasmanians living with a life-limiting illness to engage with a healthcare professional early in their diagnosis, which can considerably improve their quality of life. We are strengthening palliative care services with an additional \$21 million to ensure that Tasmanians have access to the best possible palliative care.

Time expired.

[12.06 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Speaker, the closure of the St Helens Private Hospital will have an enormously detrimental and dramatic effect. It is already having a dramatic effect on the staff who were working at St Helens Private Hospital and on the patients who were relying on those vital mental health services. There are still no answers about how they will be replaced and people are feeling, quite understandably, terrified and fearful for their wellbeing, their safety and their lives around what is going to happen, going forward.

When those mental health beds close it will be about a halving of mental health beds available around the state. We are going to lose 31 mental health beds; the eight-bed Mother and Baby Unit, which I spoke about a couple of weeks ago in here; as well as those three TMS chairs.

As I said last time, TMS treatment is life-changing treatment that treats treatment-resistance depression. For so many people, it is the last option for any treatment that can allow them to get back on track with their lives and deal with their depression. I know people who are receiving those services at St Helens now, and who have in the past, and they are absolutely terrified about what that means because there will now be one or possibly two TMS chairs available - not through St Helens but through other providers - and the pressure on those is going to become enormous. We heard the Premier say in question time today that he is disappointed with Healthscope's decision. I recognise that it is not a state-run hospital, it is a private business and a private hospital but it is part of the healthcare system in the state.

As Minister for Health and Premier, he should have been aware and he should have been acting on this, before it got to this critical juncture where people are going to be without the services they need. There are still some unanswered questions about this. When did the Premier find out that they were going to close? What action did he take at that time? We have seen with the closure of other health facilities over the last few years in this term of Liberal Government; I am thinking specifically about access to termination services in the private sector. The previous health minister, Michael Ferguson, knew about that potential closure and chose not to act. There are still unanswered questions for the Premier to answer about when he found out and what steps he took. Did he find out and choose to do nothing or did he find out and start those conversations? Of course, it is not a public hospital, but it is part of the whole system of healthcare which the government of the day has a fundamental moral and ethical duty to be overseeing.

In any case, regardless of when the Government started their conversation, the reality is that it is going to close. We are going to lose those mental health beds, we are going to lose the Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) and lose those TMS chairs in just a matter of weeks. People are feeling desperate. I recognise the staff and patients who were brave enough to share their stories with the rally that happened yesterday, outside the Executive Building. Parliamentarians could not attend because we were in this building, but I will to share some of what those workers and staff members said about the serious detrimental effect that the closure of St Helens is going to have.

Astrid Tiefholz is a nurse and a midwife. She works as a clinical care navigator around mental health, perinatal and post-natal mental health services for families. She worked at St Helens Private Hospital in both the Mental Health Unit and the MBU. She explained that the closure will mean that children and families will not receive the care they need. She said the only negative thing that she could say about St Helens' Mother and Baby Unit is that there is just not enough of it. She said that the state now had a critical opportunity to make sure that we build a much better system of perinatal mental health care for the families of Tasmania. She said: 'I think that is worth fighting for'.

I agree, it is worth fighting for. The Government has made initial comments that they are going to replace those eight Mother and Baby Unit beds that will be lost at the St Helens closure, with three or possibly two beds at the Royal. Of course, we welcome - and those staff and families will welcome - the fact that the Government is doing something to try to replace those beds. However, the reality is that the model of care that can be provided at the Royal is

very different to the model of care for a Mother and Baby Unit that can be provided in a clinic like St Helens.

If those Mother and Baby Unit beds are part of maternity or part of paediatrics, the paediatric wait times are already devastatingly long in Tasmania. I had a constituent ring my office last week, who needs a paediatrician for her child. Not a mother and baby admission, but a paediatrician. She said she has been advised that the public system wait time will probably be about two years. This is children that we are talking about. Things happen quickly in children's lives, especially when they need medical care. She attempted to see someone in the private system and she has found that private paediatricians who practice in Southern Tasmania all have their books closed. That is affecting hundreds and thousands of families.

While it is encouraging that there is going to at least be something done to try to replace some of those lost Mother and Baby Unit beds, we really do need to recognise that the clinical model of care that could be provided at St Helen's Mother and Baby Unit is a very different clinical model of care that what can be provided in an acute hospital setting. It is not going to be the same model of service. It is incumbent on the Government to do everything it can to make sure that a Mother and Baby Unit in the style that St Helen's was able to provide is provided for Tasmanian families. Without it, people will really be suffering.

Not to mention how much impact the loss of 31 mental health beds will have. People are understandably feeling terrified about that. I also want to commend patient, Maddison Cutler, who spoke at the rally yesterday. She spoke about the services that she was receiving through the mental health beds at St Helen's. She said that she is completely and utterly terrified 'if my life will actually continue' without those services. We do need to hear those voices.

Time expired.

[12.21 p.m.]

Mr WOOD (Bass) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to rise on this matter of public importance to speak on the Tasmanian Liberal Government's record on health. In particular, today I would like to focus on health innovation around my electorate of Bass.

A focus of our Government which is articulated in our draft long-term health plan is to maximise our delivery of care in the community, including in patients' homes, as this can free up our hospitals, ambulances, and emergency departments.

Innovations in this area include to deliver on a 2021 election commitment we funded, Launceston urgent care centre, a private GP practice at Newstead to provide an after-hours urgent care alternative to the Launceston General Hospital's emergency department. The trial means people in Launceston are able to receive urgent treatment at the clinic outside regular GP hours, and at no charge for eligible concession card holders. We now look forward to working with the Australian Government to establish these centres around the state.

The Community Rapid Response Service commenced as an innovation in the north and now operates across Tasmania as an important strategy to minimise the need for hospital care for people who can be cared for safely at home or in our community clinics and residential aged care facilities. The service operates 365 per year, with up to four visits provided per client per day, and a target referral response time of up to four hours. Very few Community Rapid Response Service patients require admission to hospital, demonstrating that the service is

achieving the objectives and delivering responsive, safe, high-quality care in the community and minimising the need for hospital presentations.

To strengthen our efforts to provide care in the community and to keep people out of hospital, we have deployed nine community paramedics across the state, providing care to lower acuity patients in the community and avoiding unnecessary hospital transfers as appropriate. Community paramedics commenced from 3 August 2022, and had treated 1770 patients at 31 March 2023, with 58 per cent not requiring transport to hospital.

The Tasmanian Government's 2022-23 budget allocated \$150 million to the Digital Health Transformation Program over the next four years. This investment is part of our Government's 10-year \$476 million commitment to implement the state's first digital health strategy. The Government is already delivering on its promise to revive a more modern, integrated healthcare system for Tasmanians, with an e-referral successfully implemented at the Launceston General Hospital in November 2022.

There is also an innovation to address current demand by deploying our mental health co-response initiative, PACER, working to treat more Tasmanians in the community and keeping people out of hospital. Our results have been incredibly successful. In the first year, 1814 people were seen by PACER with 76 per cent staying in the community and avoiding hospitalisation.

Our Government also understands that access to timely affordable primary healthcare including general practitioners is a critically important part of the health system. While primary healthcare is the responsibility of the federal government and despite the best efforts of hard-working GPs, we are seeing falling bulk billing rates and increasing difficulty accessing appointments.

At the end of January this year our Government announced that through partnership with the Australian Government, Tasmanians will trial an innovative new employment model for general practice training. The trial of a single employer model for GP registrars, including rural generalist trainees, will make training in rural general practice more attractive and will go a long way in improving recruitment and retention of GPs in our rural communities and improve wait lists for vital general practice services that we so desperately need.

We stand by our Government's track record of delivering innovative health initiatives. I take this opportunity to thank all our hard-working health workers who have continued to respond to very high demand.

We all know the challenges in our health system and we need to work together to implement innovative solutions. Tasmanians expect health to be above politics. They just want access to better health care and that is what our Government is focused on delivering.

[12.27 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I could not get outside yesterday and stand with the people who were rallying against the closure of St Helen's and calling on the health minister to do something about it because we were in here all day with the vote of no confidence in the Premier. Part of our no confidence in the Premier is on the record for his failure to focus

on Health. He has totally dropped his attention on the most important portfolio he is responsible for since he has become the flag waver for the AFL stadium.

The minister describes the closure of St Helens as 'disappointing'. Well let us call it for what it is: it is a calamity; it is dangerous; and frightening for the patients who are there. The psychiatrist and psychologist I have spoken to on the phone have both been in tears. They have to listen to sobbing frightened patients who are deeply concerned for their life on a daily basis. Maddison Cutler, who spoke yesterday at the rally, talked very clearly about what she fears will happen to her. She has finally been able to get into therapy after being on a waiting list since October last year. It is therapy that cannot be obtained anywhere else in Tasmania. Two days after, Healthscope pulled up stumps.

We are not surprised that a private health provider would buy a hospital, run it down, fail to maintain it and cook the books to make it look as though it is not a viable financial investment. We are not surprised about that. We are surprised that the health minister, someone who has been in parliament for two decades, does not understand that that is how private businesses work. They are for profit. It is not surprising that they would decide it is not in their interest, especially as Healthscope has been taken over by the Canadian company Brookfield. They are working on a global level. Tasmania is just too far away - it is annoying. They have used the facility as long as they can be bothered and they are walking away.

We are not surprised. The Premier needs to have a really good think about the quality of the advice he has been getting about St Helens. We are concerned that he is not getting proper advice about what is really going on there because from the people I have talked to - the GPs, the psychiatrists, the psychologists - it is pretty clear that Healthscope is telling a false story about the bed occupancy rates. They claim that 60 per cent of the 39 beds that are available are occupied. The only way that could possibly be true, according to staff there, is if they are including the beds they have left in disrepair and refuse to fix up and if they include the days on the weekend - two days out of seven when they do not admit patients. They do not bother opening the doors on Saturdays and Sundays to admit patients who are desperate for life-saving treatment because they would have to pay their staff weekend rates, so they probably include those two of seven days in their bed occupancy.

They also do not include the days where they close the whole hospital over the Christmas and New Year period because they would have to pay their staff high penalty rates. For about a month of the year you cannot even get those services even if you are lucky enough to have private health cover, but if you want to get in as a public patient, the number of hoops that this Government has put in place for people to jump through - desperate mothers - to get some support in the two beds of the seven beds are meant to be for public patients but the estimate that we have heard - and I would like the minister to put on the record if he knows otherwise - is that two to three per cent of the beds are occupied by public patients, so there is no support under this Liberal Government for mothers who are desperate for some treatment and care.

I want to give a shout-out to the staff who will be losing their jobs, but to put the context for the minister, it is not just the staff, the individuals who will be losing their jobs, it is the state of Tasmania that is losing the expertise of these registered nurses who specialise in lactation consulting, counselling, and settling advice. They are advocates for mothers. They give them a space that is like wrapping the village community around those mothers when they need it. They are not replaceable. They are not just there. They are older women who are on the edge of retirement and there is no plan from the minister to replace them. He has three beds

he is pushing into the paediatric unit for just 39 of the beds that are available at St Helens Private Hospital.

There are options. He can do something. We want to hear him talk about stepping in and negotiating to formally continue the services for everyone who is a patient there, for the 1000 patients who are on the psychology room books, the apparent 1000 patients. One of the psychiatrists, I understand, has 2000 patients on their books. In the long-term recovery therapy groups, there are thousands of people. These services are not replaceable. The Hobart Private Hospital cannot cook up any more space because they have a one-year waiting list for TMS - one year for their one machine. There is nothing that the Premier and Health minister can do except enter into an arrangement to investigate buying the building and taking it into the State Service and a formal continuation of services, regardless of whether the building is sold or not, in a lease arrangement to make sure there is no gap in the services.

Time expired.

Matter noted.

JUSTICE AND RELATED LEGISLATION MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS BILL 2022 (No. 43)

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 and new clause A -

Ms ARCHER - Mr Deputy Chairman, I move -

That the Council amendments be agreed to.

Members will recall the debate last year, hopefully, on the Justice and Related Legislation Miscellaneous Amendments Bill 2022, which I will refer to as the Justice and Related Bill.

Ms O'Connor - It was not last year, it was last sitting week.

Ms ARCHER - Different miscellaneous bill, Cassy.

The Justice and Related Bill contains minor amendments that update and clarify a number of different acts in my Justice portfolio and furthers our commitment to ensuring that our legislative framework is clear, contemporary and fit for purpose. The bill has been returned from the other place with two amendments, both of which our Government supports.

First, the innate variations of sex characteristics amendment, so that is that bill, not the one we dealt with last week. I welcome the amendment made in the other place to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Act 1999 to omit the word 'intersex' and instead insert the words 'innate variations of sex characteristics'. In November last year in this place I committed to contemporising the language in our legislation as a measure of setting the standards of a confident and inclusive community where all people are treated fairly and with respect.

This commitment was pending completion of work by my Department of Justice to review terminology in this place and I am pleased to share that this work has now been completed, with my Department of Justice recently releasing the framework for data categories and collection, sex gender variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation, which I will refer to as the framework because it is a rather long title.

Following completion of this framework, I tabled the Justice Miscellaneous (Outdated Sex Terminology) Bill 2023, which updates language in various acts to refer to innate variations of sex characteristics, and ensures consistency in our legislation.

Members will recall recent debate on this bill which passed the House on 12 May 2023, which I think is why Ms O'Connor was getting confused, and I was as well.

Given this important work has now been completed, I of course support this amendment.

The second amendment deals with the amendments to the Coroners Act. The second amendment inserts a clause into the Coroners Act 1995 to make it explicit that an aggrieved person may appeal a senior next of kin decision to the Supreme Court.

Members will recall our Government introduced the Justice and Related Bill to amend the Coroners Act by legislating a positive duty on the court for the senior next of kin, along with others who have a sufficient interest in the death to be provided with prescribed categories of information about the operation of the Coroners Act.

It is still our Government's view that disputes about the senior next of kin should, in the first instance, be resolved within the Coroners Court once all of the relevant information has been provided. This is the preferred way of resolving such disputes given any appeals or reviews taking place outside the coronial division are likely to delay the important time-sensitive tasks the court needs to undertake following a person's death, which may in turn delay coronial processes.

I restate that there are existing avenues for dispute resolution and review, including Supreme Court review. However, I acknowledge the views of stakeholders in this area and understand that some members of our community may be reassured by having this appeal right explicitly stated.

I therefore also support this amendment and commend the bill to the House.

Ms HADDAD - Mr Deputy Chair, the Labor Party is happy to accept these amendments in the upper House. I want to reflect on some of the debates we had downstairs. I agree with what the Attorney-General just said, that ideally disputes around coronial decisions on senior next of kin should not go straight to the Supreme Court, through the Coroners division and through the office and so on.

However, I remind members that the reason we are here is because of what happened to Ben Jago and his family when Nathan Lunson, his partner, took his own life. I will not go back over all of those details, but I know that the intention of the original bill was to rectify the law and make sure that the tragic set of circumstances that Ben Jago and his family were put through can never happen again. That was something supported by all parts of the Chamber.

I attempted to move an amendment in the lower House. I was reflecting on my *Hansard* before we were discussing these amendments and I was very effusive in my thanks to the OPC for their assistance in trying to draft an amendment that would allow a Supreme Court appeal. I acknowledge that the amendment I came to the Chamber with was probably overly complex. The intention of it was to make sure that in the event of a dispute around who was senior next of kin and cannot be resolved through those other means, that there is an opportunity available to family members to challenge that in the Supreme Court.

I commend the upper House and thank the Government for accepting the amendment that was moved in the other place and show my respect to the Office of Parliamentary Counsel, who do an amazing job in turning ideas that we have as parliamentarians into something that will work legislatively.

Ms Archer - Quite often you can work with them in the Legislative Council because of the time that they have.

Ms HADDAD - That is right. It is a different way of working.

I know that was a very lengthy debate in the upper House. There was a shared desire in the upper House to make sure that what happened to Ben Jago and his family cannot occur again and an acknowledgement of the recommendations of the community sector organisations which had made representations to Government and to the parliament.

I will reflect on the submission made to the original bill by Ben Bartl, who is the principal solicitor at the Community Legal Centre (CLC). The CLC strongly supported the Government's intention to ensure that Ben Jago's experience with the Coroners Office does not occur again. He noted that the bill seeks to achieve that aim by clarifying that upon investigation into a death, the Coroner will provide information to the senior next of kin and any other person who has an interest in the investigation. He said:

The bill sets out that any general or specific information that is specified in the regulations will be provided to both the senior next of kin and other persons with an interest in the investigation.

Information that we believe should be included in the regulation includes the purpose of the coronal investigation and applying for senior next of kin and the rights of the senior next of kin.

However, we strongly recommend that the Coroners Act is further amended to explicitly make clear that a party aggrieved by the senior next of kin decision may appeal to the Supreme Court.

That relates to what the Attorney-General said that there are current appeal mechanisms available. It was noted in that submission and in the submission from TasCOSS or from other organisations that while there are appeal mechanisms available already, many people would not be aware of them unless they engaged a lawyer and knew how to seek their right of appeal under the Judicial Review Act and were represented to do that.

There was a recognition by those committee organisations and by the parliament that when people are interacting, often for the first time, with the Coroners Office it is at a time of

enormous grief and confusion. When somebody passes away there is so much to be done, which all of us, sadly, have been through at one point or another in our lives. Being aware of your rights of review under the Judicial Review Act is probably not front of mind. It is a very hard time to navigate for anybody.

As a result of that original bill, there is now, I believe, more information through handbooks and websites and guides provided by the Coronial division of the court to families. I reiterate that I am very pleased that the upper House was able to consider, move and accept an amendment that ensures that when other options fail there is a clear pathway and avenue for appeal to the Supreme Court that is not limited to Ben Jago's specific situation. It is not limited just to a spouse being able to appeal that decision, but anybody who is aggrieved by a decision made by the Coroners Office to award somebody the status of senior next of kin when they believe that somebody else should have been nominated as a senior next of kin.

There is a very clear hierarchy set out in the Coroners Act which the court would be able to apply. I am very pleased that this amendment has been put forward and accepted. I agree with the Attorney-General that there will be several members of the community who will be very relieved to know that this avenue of appeal is now available.

It was very widely spoken about in the media: how heartwrenching and heartbreaking that situation was. To lose a loved one in tragic circumstances is heartbreaking, then to go through the administrative nightmare that followed Ben Jago's partner's death, I cannot imagine anybody ever really coming through that. It was an awful time for his family. It is very profound that that negative experience has now had a positive impact on Tasmania's law. I am hopeful that if those tragic circumstances were to occur for another family there would be a much more seamless experience.

Ms Archer - The materials available on the website are so much better now.

Ms HADDAD - There are better materials available on the website. Hopefully it will be a much more administratively seamless and less stressful encounter by any family dealing with a dispute around who should be senior next of kin. From time to time disputes arise around estranged family members or people who might look, on paper, like they should be the senior next of kin but in fact another person should be recognised in that role. That is a longer speech than I intended to give. It feels like a very finicky policy change - changing a sub-section of the Coroners Act - but it is quite a profound and meaningful change that has been made.

It is also a significant win for those advocates who have supported Ben Jago and his family and supported the need for this change. Ben Bartl, from Community Legal, who I quoted as well as advocates from Equality Tasmania, Charlie Burton, Rodney Croome and others, have advocated for the need for this change over many years. It is a positive thing that it has now come to fruition. With those comments we accept the amendments.

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Deputy Chair, I echo everything Ms Haddad just said. We are very comfortable supporting these amendments, we supported the amendment to the Coroners Act that allowed for those appeal rights when it was moved in this place and we are thankful to the advocates who argued for this change, including the wonderful Ben Bartl from Community Legal Centres Tasmania and Equality Tasmania, Charlie Burton. Particularly, I also acknowledge the struggle, the suffering and the advocacy of Ben Jago. It was an extremely sad set of circumstances and I hope Ben, who I am sure is still grieving, is comforted

by the fact that what he endured and the unfairness that he experienced has led to a meaningful reform of the law.

I have a constituent who lost their brother to suicide and a decision was made by the coroner on next of kin that compounded my constituent's grief. At the time, there was a sense of bewilderment and injustice that my constituent had not been recognised for their very close relationship to their brother. At the time, I felt a bit powerless to help, so I think this is really significant.

As Ms Haddad said, it is not a massive amendment to the Coroners Act but it is meaningful and it will provide some comfort to people. I acknowledge that the Attorney-General has been proactive in making sure that the processes of the Coroners Office and the information that is provided to people are open and readily accessible. I acknowledge the Attorney-General's support now for this amendment to the Coroners Act. I am very glad to be supporting these amendments and it is nice to have something before the House that we can all agree on.

Ms Haddad - It is a nice feeling.

Ms O'CONNOR - Isn't it a lovely feeling? So, yes, more of that please.

Ms ARCHER - Mr Deputy Chair, in closing, I thank members for their contributions and the sensitive nature of them and, again, apologise profusely to Mr Jago for what he endured over a number of years, a long time now. I thank all of the advocates who met with me, particularly Rodney Croome who spearheaded that in my office at least. I acknowledge all of the other advocates, Ben Bartl and Charlie Burton.

I have had a few issues lately arise that I have dealt with in relation to coronial matters, which I will not go off track but I do consider myself to be a reformist and if something needs fixing, I will do my darndest to try to fix it.

Some things in law cannot be fixed I am told, but if there is a way around it, I like to think that I will look at it, and this is one of them. It took a little bit longer than we would like, but as I say with all law reform, we get good law reform if we consult properly. We look at unintended consequences and the like and just make sure the reform is done properly so that we are not having to come back and fix things all the time, which ironically, is what a Justice and Related Miscellaneous Amendments Bill does. We have a number of those throughout the year as people know, but they deal with a number of things, not only the coronial amendment, but the innate variations of sex characteristics amendment. That is a really important one too and has been going on for some time as well.

We have consulted with an advisory group in particular and that work is now being completed. I am very pleased that these amendments clarify things and, on that basis, the Government is happy to accept. I thank the department, OPC and all involved because I know it is a difficult process at times, so thank you. I commend the bill and the amendments to the House.

Council amendments agreed to.

Resolution agreed to.

**POLICE OFFENCES AMENDMENT (NAZI SYMBOL AND GESTURE
PROHIBITION) BILL 2023 (No. 2)**

Second Reading

[12.56 p.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Minister for Justice) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That the bill be read a second time.

Mr Speaker, this is an extremely important bill that furthers our Government's commitment to make a safe and inclusive Tasmania for all members of our community. The Police Offences Amendment (Nazi Symbol and Gesture Prohibition) Bill 2023, or the bill, inserts two new offences in the Police Offences Act 1935.

The first offence provides that a person must not by a public act and without a legitimate public purpose display a Nazi symbol if the person knows, or ought to know, that the symbol is a Nazi symbol. Our Government is strongly opposed to the deliberate use of such symbols that promote hate and cause fear in our community. As members would be aware there has been a distressing rise in reported antisemitic behaviour in Australia in recent years, including some instances in Tasmania.

Nazi symbols can be used to promote hate, not only against Jewish people but also other minority groups. This bill will help promote a safer and more inclusive Tasmania and ensure our laws appropriately reflect community expectations. I was pleased to receive supportive submissions from sectors of the community affected by these hate symbols. In particular, I thank the Hobart Hebrew Congregation and Equality Tasmania.

I will read from the Hobart Hebrew Congregation submission which highlights the need for this bill. I quote:

Nazi symbols are a reminder of one of the darkest times in humanity, the murder and attempted eradication of the Jewish people from Europe, amongst other targeted groups. By the end of World War Two, six million Jews (1.5 million of whom were children) and approximately 12.5 million other people were killed by the Nazi regime. As we move further away in time from the events of this dark chapter in history, it is essential that we do not allow the lessons of history to be forgotten, and the events of the past to be repeated. We have learned from history that the promotion of hatred through words, symbols and gestures is the precursor to violence and if it is not addressed quickly and decisively it can engender a contempt for the rule of law, mob rule and the breakdown of social cohesion and democratic institutions. Normalising hate symbols is the first step towards a desensitisation of people to abhorrent behavior. It can be the first step to forgetting, enabling and repeating history. It is therefore crucial to make clear that Nazi symbols, and the beliefs associated with them, remain abhorrent in contemporary Australia.

The general intent of the bill is to assist in denouncing vilification and extremism in Tasmania, support a culturally and linguistically diverse community and add to our legislative frameworks which promote a safe environment for all members of our community.

Importantly the bill acknowledges and protects the continued use of the ancient swastika in the Buddhist, Hindu, Jain and other communities. The bill therefore states that the display of a swastika in connection with Buddhism, Hinduism or Jainism is not a display of a Nazi symbol in contravention of the Police Offences Act.

The bill also protects other legitimate purposes for display including other religious, cultural, academic and educational purposes. Such purposes are important so that the atrocities of the Holocaust are never forgotten.

Following consultation, the bill clarifies the offence does not apply to the display of symbols -

Sitting suspended from 1 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Waiver of Government Private Members' Time

[2.30 p.m.]

Mr YOUNG (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 42(e), I indicate that the Government Private Members' Business is waived for this day's sitting.

POLICE OFFENCES AMENDMENT (NAZI SYMBOL AND GESTURE PROHIBITION) BILL 2023 (No. 2)

Second Reading

Resumed from above.

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Minister for Justice) - As I was saying, Mr Speaker, following consultation, the bill clarifies the offence does not apply to the display of symbols used in opposition to Nazism and similar fascist ideologies such as the use of the Pink Triangle by the LGBTQI+ community.

In developing this legislation, the Government has also considered the approaches to banning Nazi symbols taken in Victoria and New South Wales. As previously stated, the new offence is that a person must not, by a public act and without legitimate public purpose, display a Nazi symbol if the person knows, or ought to know, that the symbol is a Nazi symbol.

This requirement was clarified after consultation, providing both the appropriate means to enforce the offence, while allowing for the fact that a person's knowledge is subjective. For example, some people may not be in a position where they ought to know a symbol is a Nazi symbol, and the bill now allows for that.

The term 'Nazi symbol' is defined as a symbol associated with the Nazis or with Nazi ideology. Similar to New South Wales, the bill's definition is broad in order to respond to Nazi symbols generally, and not just the swastika as the most common symbol used. We do not want to be prescriptive so that the Nazi sympathisers simply move to the use of other symbols that are not specifically identified.

Following consultation, and similar to the Victorian legislation, the bill now clarifies that it also captures a symbol that so nearly resembles a Nazi symbol that it is likely to be confused with or mistaken for that symbol.

Following consultation, and similar to existing offences, it has been clarified that a court can take notice of the particulars in the complaint as evidence in the absence of evidence to the contrary. Police will always seek to charge a person clearly in contravention of the law. A person who is charged and wishes to claim a symbol is not a Nazi symbol, or that their activity had a legitimate public purpose, must produce some evidence of that fact.

The bill provides that 'public act' in relation to the display of a symbol includes any form of communication of a symbol to the public; any placement of the symbol in a location observable by the public; and the distribution or dissemination of the symbol, or of an object containing the symbol, to the public.

The online environment is unfortunately used by some people to promote hate. To ensure that the bill is effective and contemporary, the offence provision applies to public acts, including any form of communication to the public. This would include publicly accessible social media and websites.

The bill also provides a non-exhaustive list of what constitutes a 'legitimate public purpose', and this includes:

- a display done reasonably and in good faith for a genuine academic, artistic, religious, scientific, cultural, educational or law enforcement purpose;
- a symbol that is displayed on an object or contained in a document that is produced for one of those purposes;
- a symbol that is included in the making or publishing of a fair and accurate report of any event or matter that is in the public interest; or
- a symbol that is displayed for another purpose that is in the public interest.

These exceptions appropriately protect a range of activities, including appropriate historical representations in museums and other settings.

Mr Speaker, as I have mentioned, the bill was updated after consultation so that 'legitimate public purpose' includes where the display is in opposition to fascism, Nazism, neo-Nazism or other related ideologies. This includes protection for matters that may not be thought of as Nazi symbols, such as the pink triangle, which was once used in Nazi concentration camps and is now reclaimed in opposition to such shame as a positive symbol of self-identity by the LGBTQI+ community.

I acknowledge that the LGBTQI+ community can experience discrimination and hate in the name of Nazi ideology and through the public display of Nazi symbols. Many community members are aware of the historic violence and atrocities against LGBTQI+ people that is represented by Nazi symbols such as the swastika, and I am pleased that the bill's prohibition will have a positive impact on the community's sense of safety and inclusion in Tasmania.

The penalty for a person convicted of committing the offence of displaying a Nazi symbol is liable to a maximum penalty not exceeding 20 penalty units, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months. Similar to other offences in the Police Offences Act, repeat offending is considered serious. If the person has previously been convicted of the offence within a period of six months, the person is liable to a penalty not exceeding 40 penalty units, or imprisonment not exceeding six months.

The bill provides police officers with appropriate powers to enforce the offence provision where the police officer has reasonable grounds to believe the person is contravening or has contravened the offence provision. A police officer may also give a direction to a person to remove from display a Nazi symbol within a specified period if the police officer reasonably believes the person is contravening or has contravened the offence.

A person must not, without reasonable excuse, fail to comply with the direction with the maximum penalty of 10 penalty units for noncompliance. If a direction cannot be given in person, a police officer may leave the written direction at the property on which the symbol is being displayed.

If a police officer has reasonable grounds to believe that a person is contravening or has contravened a direction, the police officer may, using such force, means and assistance as is reasonably necessary, search the person, or a relevant vehicle or property, and seize a Nazi symbol. The use of such measures is consistent with police powers available for similar offending. Importantly, these provisions also provide a mechanism for a police officer to remove a Nazi symbol from public display where a person is not complying with the direction.

These provisions reach an appropriate balance of achieving the intention of the bill to prohibit display of Nazi symbols while providing appropriate safeguards. Further, the bill does not limit existing police powers from being used where appropriate, such as applying for search warrants.

The bill does not prohibit the possession of Nazi symbols or the sale of Nazi memorabilia or goods that display a Nazi symbol. However, unless there is a legitimate public purpose for the display of public goods for sale, vendors must cover any such items in order to not contravene the offence provision.

Further, in response to concerns the offence may be excessively restrictive for a person who may have a tattoo of a Nazi symbol, the bill now provides that tattoos and other forms of permanent body modification are a defence. This approach is consistent with the Victorian legislation, which also excludes tattoos from the equivalent offence.

Following consultation on the draft bill, there was a disturbing demonstration in Victoria where the Nazi salute was used. To prevent this kind of conduct in Tasmania the bill now also prohibits the use of the Nazi salute.

There is absolutely no place in our community for Nazi salutes, known as gestures in the bill, and the appalling message they send. That is why the bill includes a new offence in the Police Offences Act prohibiting the use of Nazi gestures in public places or in view of public places. This offence has the same test of knowledge as the Nazi symbol offence. It also includes exemptions that can be raised as a defence, similar to the exemptions for displaying a Nazi symbol.

A Nazi gesture is defined as:

- (a) a gesture known as the Nazi salute;
- (b) a gesture prescribed for the purposes of this definition; or
- (c) a gesture that so nearly resembles the gesture referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) that it is likely to be confused with or mistaken for such a gesture.

Concerns have been raised by some stakeholders that offenders may modify the Nazi salute slightly in an attempt to avoid prosecution. For that reason, the new offence includes a gesture that is so similar to a Nazi salute that it is likely to be mistaken for a Nazi salute. This issue has arisen in the United States of America and some European countries where similar offences exist. Equally in those jurisdictions, Nazi sympathizers have adapted by using other Nazi gestures to avoid prosecution. For that reason, the bill provides for the prescription of additional Nazi gestures if the need arises.

As the new offence is about performing a gesture rather than possessing a symbol for display, there is no need for a directions or search power for police for this offence. Similar to the penalty on which we consulted for Nazi symbols, the penalty for a person convicted of committing the offence of performing a Nazi gesture, is liable to a maximum penalty not exceeding 20 penalty units or imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months. If the person has previously been convicted of the offence within six months, the person is liable to a penalty not exceeding 40 penalty units or imprisonment not exceeding six months.

The bill also defines Nazi symbols to include depictions and recordings of Nazi gestures, as defined. This means that the offence of displaying a depictional recording of a Nazi gesture to the public is an offence and subject to the same framework as the display of symbols. Importantly, this offence adopts the same test of knowledge as the Nazi symbol offence.

Legal stakeholders overwhelmingly supported the adoption of the 'knows or ought to have known test', which is consistent with other similar offences in the Police Offences Act and the Criminal Code Act 1924.

The benefit of this approach is that it provides more certainty about the application of the offence in the Tasmanian context and supports the application of existing Tasmanian case law. The drafting of the new offence requires that a court must be subjectively satisfied that the circumstances of the offender or offending are such that the offender knows or ought to have known they are using a Nazi salute. In circumstances similar to the recent demonstrations by Nazi sympathisers in Victoria, that a person knows or ought to have known that they were using the Nazi salute, will be readily and obviously apparent due to the surrounding circumstances of the offending. As the Nazi salute by nature is a fixed gesture performed in a

certain way, rather than a momentary action like waving, the addition of the 'know or ought to have known test' is a necessary safeguard to ensure that the offence as charged in appropriate circumstances and protects against the potential for other innocuous activities to be captured.

The bill also makes it abundantly clear that police officers are not limited by the provisions relating to the new offences. For example, the Search Warrants Act 1997, can be used in relation to the new offences contained in the bill. The bill also amends the Police Offences Act to allow a police officer to arrest a person found committing the offence or where an officer has reasonable grounds to believe a person has committed the offence.

I thank everyone who considered the bill and made a submission in all its versions. I also acknowledge the support of the Hobart Hebrew Congregation and the Executive Council of the Australian Jewry, together with many other stakeholders and contributors to the bill. These important contributions, especially from legal stakeholders, have strengthened the bill and the safeguards it provides.

The bill is to commence on a date to be proclaimed. This will ensure that necessary education and training prior the commencement of the new offences can be provided to those impacted.

Mr Speaker, I commend the bill to the House.

[2.44 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Speaker, I am pleased to speak today on the Police Offences Amendment (Nazi Symbol and Gesture Prohibition) Bill 2023, and indicate that we will be supporting the bill.

I make note and welcome the expansion of the bill from the bill that was originally drafted and put out for public consultation which dealt just with the use of Nazi symbols. This bill has been expanded to also deal with the public display of the gesture that is known as the Nazi salute. This was a direct response to the fact that there had been some recent instances of Neo-Nazis appearing at rallies in Melbourne earlier this year. There was one where they appeared alongside and in support of an anti-transgender speaker who had come to Melbourne and later to Hobart to share her very divisive and anti-trans views with the community. She and her supporters claim they did not invite the Neo-Nazis along to their rally and it was something that happened alongside them. Nonetheless, the fact that Neo-Nazis were appearing in great numbers sends a pretty strong message. It was quite shocking to see them walking through the streets of Melbourne with their faces covered, chanting Nazi rhetoric and displaying the Nazi salute.

It happened again in Melbourne just a couple of weeks ago so it is very encouraging that the Government pro-actively amended the bill before it reached this place to also cover offences related to the display of the Nazi salute.

The fact is that Neo-Nazism does exist and it is dangerous. It is hateful and it speaks to a frightening underbelly of society. It demonstrates that unlike the majority of people on the planet who condemn in the strongest possible terms the evils of the Nazi regime, the horrors they inflicted on millions of Jewish people and others, there are some who seek to sanction these evils and to revive Nazi ideology and rhetoric to the detriment of society and to the

detriment of humanity. This is to be utterly condemned. There is no place for Nazism; not here, not anywhere.

It is sad that legislation like this is even required but it is required. It is vital that we progress legislation like this to make it utterly clear in no uncertain terms that Nazism and Neo-Nazism is not welcome in Tasmania. The people who promote the use of Nazi symbols and gestures will be held to account and those behaviours are to be rejected and condemned.

This is not like any other limitation on speech behaviour or sharing of information in the public. Nazism has a particular place in our political history of the world. Just in case anyone is in any doubt, it is important to remember the seriousness and the horror of the Holocaust so that such horrors can never again be repeated. I spent some time living in Germany when I was younger. I have seen the serious approach with which the German people and governments there, and around the world, have taken, to stamping out Neo-Nazism in their country and around Europe. The use of the salute and symbols has been banned in Germany for a very long time, and in many other parts of Europe as well. Modern Germans know the seriousness of this issue and have acted to outlaw the use of Nazi symbols and gestures and condemn the rise of Neo-Nazism.

From the time they assumed power, Nazis used propaganda, persecution and legislation to deny human and civil rights to the Jewish people, using centuries of anti-Semitism as their foundation. With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, Germany invaded Poland, murdering thousands of Jews in just the first few months of occupation. By 1941, the systematic murder of Europe's Jews had begun: an evil plan known by the Nazis as the Final Solution. Death squads called *Einsatzgruppen* swept Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, killing Jews by firing squad. By the end of 1941, the first extermination camp was established in Poland giving Nazis their method to continue murdering on a giant scale between 1941 and 1945. By the end of the Holocaust, six million Jewish men, women and children had been murdered in ghettos, in mass shootings, in concentration camps and extermination camps. It was an unfathomable horror. It can never be allowed to be repeated.

The Nazi regime also inflicted incredible persecution on minority groups. People with disabilities were systematically targeted for forced sterilisation and for state-sanctioned execution. People with disabilities were described by Nazis as *Lebensunwerter Leben* which means 'life unworthy of life'. It seems almost unimaginable today that anyone could be thought of in this way. Targets were people with physical disabilities, chronic illness and mental ill health. Parents were told that their disabled children and babies were being taken away to be provided the best possible care, but in reality they were taken away and killed, often by lethal injection or gas. A terrifying regime of state sanctioned abuse and death. It is believed that there were over 360 000 forced sterilisations and a quarter of a million people with disability were killed by 1939. The numbers are likely to be much higher.

Gay, lesbian and transgender people were also horrifically targeted and persecuted by the Nazi regime. Prior to Nazism, lesbian, gay and trans people could live quite freely in Germany. Berlin was one of the most progressive cities in the world and there were numerous gay and lesbian and trans organisations, publications, cafes, and bars. Nazism and the war changed that with hundreds of thousands of gay, lesbian and transgender people arrested, imprisoned, beaten, tortured, subjected to humiliating and grotesque experimentation, sent to concentration camps and executed.

People of colour were also targeted and persecuted by the evils of the Nazi regime. Mixed-race children were forcibly sterilised and black prisoners received even harsher treatment than white prisoners: less food, worse torture and harsher treatment when incarcerated. Many were worked to death or executed. Many other minority groups were also targeted and persecuted by the Nazi regime, people who they considered an underclass of society. It is another abhorrent term and I cannot imagine people being categorised in that way.

We do need to reflect on this past. Last sitting week the parliament made a tripartite resolution recognising the genocide inflicted by the Ottoman regime with the killing of over two million Armenian, Syrian and Greek people between 1913 and 1925. Speakers on that motion in this place noted that when Adolf Hitler began his systematic persecution of Jewish people and others in Germany and Europe, he had apparently remarked, 'Who remembers the Armenians?'. If we needed a reminder more poignant about why we must forever remember and forever condemn these atrocities it is that.

The Armenian genocide was the first 20th century genocide to occur, but it was not the last with the atrocities of World War II following. There have been genocides since: in Rwanda, in Palestine and in other areas around the globe. If we do not learn from our past we are doomed to repeat it. The rise of Neo-Nazism, as shown recently with those rallies in Melbourne, shows us that legislation like this is sadly needed. Genocide does not spring out of nowhere. It starts as intolerance: intolerance that is allowed to flourish into hate and hate that is allowed to flourish into something much more dangerous and much more evil.

The bill creates an offence to display a Nazi symbol, which is not limited just to the swastika but other symbols acquired and used by Nazis. It also creates an offence to perform the Nazi gesture known as the salute or something that is similar enough to the Nazi salute to be seen as that. Both those offences are punishable by 20 penalty units or up to three months in prison or 40 penalty units and up to six months in prison for a second or subsequent offence.

The Hobart Hebrew Congregation in its submission commented that the penalties are quite a lot higher in New South Wales. In this bill the penalties will be between \$3620 and \$7240 and three to six months in prison. In New South Wales the penalties are \$11 000 and/or 12 months in prison. What thought was given to higher penalties in the drafting of the bill in light of that submission?

It is important to note that there are multiple exemptions for where the display or use of the Nazi symbols are not going to be considered to be offences or a defence to displaying them. It will be permissible to still have museum displays, documentaries, and school curricula teach about the Holocaust. It will be permissible to display a Nazi symbol for genuine academic, artistic, religious, scientific, cultural, educational, legal or law enforcement purposes, as well as for opposing or demonstrating against fascism, Nazism or Neo-Nazism as well as making fair and accurate reports and publishing on events and matters that are in the public interest. There is also a catchall exception for other purposes that are in the public interest.

Legislation like this bill and others like it around the country and the world are not about rejecting history or covering up history or forgetting about history. It is quite the opposite. It is about rejecting Neo-Nazism and rejecting the ideology that goes with it. This is not about preventing the artistic use, the educational or cultural use, or law enforcement use of these symbols. It is not about no longer teaching about the Holocaust or no longer informing the

public about the horrors of that time in the world's history, but it is about rejecting any possibility that it could ever reoccur.

On behalf of stakeholders, I want to ask some questions of the Attorney-General in addition to the one about penalties. The minister mentioned it in her second reading speech but, as we all know, and as I spoke about, there was terrible persecution by the Nazi regime of gay, lesbian and transgender people. Homosexual men were forced to wear a pink triangle on their clothing to identify them as homosexual. Since the end of the war that pink triangle has been reclaimed by the LGBTQ community and is now a symbol of strength, political expression and pride.

There have been instances, including in recent history in all of our lifetimes, where gay and lesbian rights groups, including in Tasmania, were prevented from displaying the pink triangle. That was part of the logo of the Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group - they were still probably the Tasmanian Gay Rights Group - when the Salamanca stalls were being shut down, and there were people who objected to the use of the pink triangle on that stall and in that logo. The people who were objecting to that at that time were not objecting because they were offended by the historical use of the pink triangle by Nazis but because of homophobia and transphobia.

Ms O'Connor - Because they are hateful.

Ms HADDAD - That is right. That is just one example. There may be others where former Nazi symbols have been reclaimed and are now used as symbols of pride and strength. Can the Attorney-General confirm, for the comfort of the community, that that type of use is still permitted and point to where in the legislation that use is protected?

Collectors have asked whether there are protections for the display and sale of things that use the swastika before it was a Nazi symbol. They have given some examples of things like covers of books and household items that were not part of the Nazi regime. That symbol existed prior to Nazism and was acquired by Nazis so some collector groups have asked about the display of items like that.

I wrote a letter a couple of weeks ago to the minister for Transport - I have not had a response yet but it is only a recent letter - after a member of the community wrote to me because they saw a numberplate on a Tasmanian car that was HH88. To anyone who does not know that would just look like a normal Tasmanian numberplate, but that combination of letters and numbers was a Nazi symbol used in the Nazi regime. That numberplate could be seen as a Nazi symbol. How would something like that be dealt with as people might try to find new and creative ways to get around the legislation or to display Nazi symbols?

Finally, I would like clarification around the enforcement process. As the minister outlined, the bill says that if police see a Nazi symbol there is a process to be followed. If the person is present, the police can direct them to remove the Nazi symbol. It is an offence not to comply with that direction. I believe they can then immediately seize it if the person has refused to comply. If the person is not present, then the process is that they are to affix a notification on the premises for a notice period and return at the end of that notice period. If the symbol is still there then they have the power to search and seize that symbol. They will not be required to get a warrant in the usual way because that notice period has expired.

The Government needed to come up with a process other than using the regular Search Warrants Act, but I would like to have some further clarity around how that process will work. What form will the notice need to take physically? Is it a letter in a letterbox? Is it a tag or a physical thing? How should it be affixed? What if it is not easy or possible to affix the notice to the particular object where the Nazi symbol is being displayed, and what would happen if the person displaying the symbol claims that they did not see the notice or if it has fallen off or blown away in the wind. What happens then to that notice period having been served and then the power for the police to then seize it?

I did note that in subclause (5) of the bill, the police can follow that process in addition to any other action that they can take under any other act. I wonder whether this process is likely even to be followed or if police are more likely to use their existing powers under the Search Warrants Act.

I suppose some of this might be a matter of wait and see how the process rolls out and potentially there might need to be some revisions down the track to how this is enforced. I do not imagine that it is going to be a daily event for police; I hope it is not. There are not a lot of Nazi symbols that we see walking around the streets of Tasmania, but it is important that when that does occur, the process is a workable one. I would like some more clarity about that.

Finally, many of the stakeholders did talk about the need for an education campaign around these changes, both for the public and for the people who will be using this legislation. I would like to know what is planned in that space from the Government.

I thank and recognise the many stakeholders who wrote to the Government in their consultation process in support of the bill and who lobbied for these changes, in particular the Australian Jewish Association and the Hobart Hebrew Congregation. I will finish by quoting the Hobart Hebrew Congregation, who said in their submission:

As the passing of time leads to less understanding of the true nature of the Holocaust specifically, and the Second World War in general, legislation is beneficial to prevent this loss of knowledge from being exploited to recruit young people at risk of radicalisation to commit abhorrent acts.

If enacted, this bill will go a long way to assisting the fight against hate in our state.

As I said, this bill and legislation like it around the world is not about ignoring or rejecting or covering up our past. It is about learning from history, rejecting Neo-Nazism and protecting our community from the evils that Neo-Nazism represents.

[3.02 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, I thank Ms Haddad for her considered contribution on this bill. I thank the minister for bringing it forward. I note that the Greens have been advocating for this reform in parliament and across the Estimates table for some years now. It is regrettably a relief to see this bill come before us. I only say regrettably because, as Ms Haddad said, it is sad that we are in a position where we have to enact a reform such as this.

There is no question at all that fascism, Nazism, is on the rise in many western countries around the world, and we are seeing a hateful and unholy alliance between fascism, hard right

Christian nationalists and anti-vaxxers who are being fed by - I do not know what - dark forces data harvesting, but certainly using all the tools of social media that are available to them to spread hate and fear in communities across the world.

These people, invariably white men, are anti-diversity, anti-progress, anti-science and anti-life. There is no 'both sides-ing' fascism. I have to say after the day and a half we have had in here so far it is good that we are debating legislation on which we can all strongly agree. All of us strongly agree that this is significant and necessary legislation. I know a number of other jurisdictions have acted or are acting.

As the minister said, the bill we are debating today which prohibits Nazi symbols and Nazi gestures is not dissimilar from the Victorian model. As I understand from the briefing we received - and I thank the Attorney-General's departmental officers - there is also planned legislation along these lines in Western Australia, Queensland and the ACT.

In Florida they are banning books: books by people like Mem Fox, the great Australian children's writer. So many beautiful, powerful and simple books are being banned in that weirdo Governor Ron DeSantis' Florida and we are seeing a really disturbing trend now around the world of fascists, Neo-Nazis, invariably with their faces covered - it is the one time they believe in masks when they are trying to hide themselves - targeting transgender and LGBTIQ+ people.

There has been a call from some of those right-wing evangelical, I think anti-Christian, pastors for the eradication of transgender people. Of course as the mother of a transgender child it genuinely frightens me that someone would go after my child, or anyone like Jasper, just because they have chosen to be who they are. We have to make sure that the law provides the greatest possible protection for transgender people, Jewish people, people of colour, people with disabilities, and all marginalised groups. In the context of fascism I would include women in those cohorts of people who are made vulnerable by the increase of hateful actions and rhetoric. There is no both sides in fascism and we cannot tolerate such wicked intolerance.

When we were at our old offices down near Elizabeth Wharf back in 2018 before the flood of biblical proportions in May or June 2018 that flooded us out, I walked out the front to the wharf side of the offices one day. Overnight a person or persons had put a Nazi symbol on our little shingle that said 'Greens Offices'. I did not really think too much of it at the time apart from, 'That's some hateful idiot who hates the Greens, what's new?'.

Ms Archer - I had one in my very first campaign.

Ms O'CONNOR - On your first campaign?

Ms Archer - Back in 2006.

Ms O'CONNOR - Yes, it is chilling. It is easy in the worlds that we occupy to forget about that dark underbelly Ms Haddad talked about. There is an organisation, a group of young, undoubtedly white men in Tasmania who are part of the National Socialist Network who were the Nazis 'siege heiling' for transphobe Posie Parker when she was in Melbourne. This group is called Tasman Forth. There was some excellent reporting as result of research done by the White Rose Society by David Killick in the *Mercury* some months ago.

This Tasman Forth group is named after a very well-known Tasmanian Nazi sympathiser, fascist and anti-Semite, Alexander Rudd Mills, who died in 1964. This group has masked and posting pictures of their activities on social media, desecrated and painted on the transgender pink, blue and white flag, and has splashed swastikas on synagogues. It is really hard to understand what goes on in the mind of someone who could do that. There have been 'White Power' stickers splashed around Tasmania. This Tasman Forth organisation, being part of a national socialist network is one of about six distinct cells, if you want to call it cells, like a terrorist cell, operating across six capitals. We can disagree on many things but what we all do agree on is the importance of inclusion and protecting minorities. We can all agree that we need to delegitimise and make illegal, unequivocally, the activities like the National Socialist Network and Tasman Forth. It is too high risk to the people we represent and the fabric of our community to allow these activities to go on unchallenged and unchecked.

I take the opportunity to pass on my sadness and regret to Rosemary Harwood, the mother of the late Marjorie Harwood, who was a transgender woman who was allegedly gang raped while incarcerated in the men's prison at Risdon. Rosemary Harwood had set up a memorial for her daughter but a group of haters, Neo-Nazis, fascists, vandalised it with thick red paint with the transphobic acronym YWNBAW, which means you will never be a woman. I do not understand this kind of brain, so full of hate. The poor woman suffered in her life to grapple with gender identity and then found her way through it and then to suffer this. As Rosemary Harwood said to journalist Teah Yuen:

I want whoever did this to know that if they do it again we will keep cleaning it off. They will not defeat us. We will keep Marjorie's memory alive, no matter what, Mrs Harwood said. 'Nobody can intimidate me.'

She asks:

Why have you got so much hate against transgender people?

There is a lot of hate in the world. It is a challenge for us as representatives in a democratic parliament in an inclusive multi-cultural, big-hearted Tasmanian community. We have the biggest hearts in the country. We are the highest givers per capita in the country, but it is a real challenge for us to deal with this hatefulness and make sure that our laws protect marginalised people.

I want to give the Attorney-General enough time to wrap up. Hopefully we can pass this legislation within the hour. I thank Ms Haddad. I believe you had much more to say and you truncated it. I will do the same.

Ms Haddad - I cut it in half.

Ms Archer - It would be good to get it through.

Mr O'Byrne - How long do you need? I want a couple of minutes as well.

Ms O'CONNOR - In the *Saturday Paper*, writer and host of Triple R Radio program, *Clear View Mirror*, Sam Elkin said:

Nazis are so obviously evil that some people may be tempted to see the #Let WomenSpeak brigade as comparatively benign. [But Kellie Jay] and her small band of supporters, however, spout a hateful ideology that poses a very significant risk of harm.

Far right extremists, Neo-Nazis and Christians alike - and when I use the word 'Christians' here, I do not believe these people are actual Christians in the spirit of the teachings of Jesus. Their intolerance, I think, precludes them from being actual Christians. Sorry, I digress.

Far right extremists including Neo Nazis and Christians alike -

Ms Archer - I tend to agree with you. I cannot understand it.

Ms O'CONNOR - It is not what is in the Bible and I went to multiple Catholic schools.

- and anti-trans campaigners both spew hate under the guise of protecting women. They feed each other. No one who saw those pictures of that band of men in black, masked and giving the Nazi salute on the steps of the Victorian Parliament House will forget those images. While Kellie-Jay Keen and the anti-transgender people who she stands with later disavowed the appearance of that Nazi group, they did not at the time. They looked pretty happy that those young men were there.

This bill will prevent Nazi symbolism and symbolic actions or gestures. It will help to prevent such symbols and gestures from being part of a rallying point for hard-right hateful ideologies. Beyond the law itself, we all have a responsibility to name up hate and discrimination when we see it and remain vigilant to the circumstances faced by marginalised people in our community. Whether they be Jewish people or someone who lives with a disability, or a person of colour, or a transgender person, they are our fellow Tasmanians, Australian, citizens of the world. They face dangers in everyday life so we have a moral responsibility to be there to defend and protect.

Dr Kaz Ross, a researcher who has done some outstanding work at the University of Tasmania has said about this bill and this issue:

This is not about free speech. People use Nazi symbols to make other people afraid. The Nazi salute is a Roman salute designed to cause fear in the people watching. Any time a Nazi symbol is displayed in public, it can be used with intent. That includes body tattoos and people's chests and the Roman salute or the Nazi salute or the Sieg Heil - symbols which are used with Nazi intent can be covered under this legislation. That is really important. I think that is where Victoria was let down when they banned only the symbol.

This bill is well drafted; it is extremely well intended and a necessary reform. We do not see the need to go into Committee. It provides the two crimes of knowingly displaying a Nazi symbol or knowingly making a Nazi gesture but then it also provides those exceptions for education, arts, and for cultures such as Hinduism, so this is good legislation.

I have not seen what all the other jurisdictions are doing but I think this is model legislation potentially for other jurisdictions. I am very glad that the Attorney-General has

brought this forward and that we will all in this place agree to support this vitally significant bill for our times.

[3.18 p.m.]

Mr O'BYRNE (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I rise to provide my full support for this bill. Like other speakers, we should not have to be here talking about the offensive nature and the need to respond in a legislative way to people behaving in this way and using Nazi symbols and gestures in a way to frighten and threaten people, to exhibit behaviour which not only unsettles people but genuinely triggers fear and hatred and promotes hatred in our community. We should not have to be doing this but the fact that we do and the fact that we are is very important and a good reflection on this House that we are able to respond in this way.

I thank the minister and her department for the briefing that I received on this bill. All of us who respect democracy know the importance of this bill, who respect people's right to exist and live in a safe community, conduct themselves and make decisions about their own lives in a way which can be supported by the community, where differences are respected and where minorities know they are safe in our community, are welcome and play a role, and we respect their role in our community.

The history of these symbols and gestures have a number of threads through this. There is imagery through a number of religions and you are right to refer to the history of the old Roman legions. When the Nazi Party formed, in their sociopathic way they tried to create a range of symbols and gestures which forced people to identify with their totalitarian and evil philosophy. They brought together those two ancient gestures as a rallying point or as a point to inspire or to identify and to signify difference within the 1920s and 1930s Germany and the overthrow of the Weimar Republic. They used these images and fascist ideology to terrorise the people of Germany and Austria-Hungary and was used to justify the most horrific acts.

It is not just about this parliament saying these kinds of images and gestures are offensive to the Jewish people, they are offensive to all people. This is not just us saying we are here to protect other Jewish people, we are here to protect transgender people and to send a message that -

Ms Archer - It sends chills down my spine.

Mr O'BYRNE - You get so angry about these things. I remember as a child, my first images of these was watching the ABC about the Holocaust and being in shock at how humans could treat each other. Then you see examples in the 1950s and the 1960s in the USA with the KKK and their use of these symbols to promote a sick ideology. You never think that it would happen in your own community because it always happened somewhere else and happened in history, it happened in other societies, in other communities.

A certain person in Launceston was letterboxing communities with racist ideology and quoting and provoking a fascist Nazi-style ideology in Launceston. It was quite offensive. The Launceston community rose up against that person. At the time our response was unified in saying this was not acceptable in our community. This is inspiring hatred and it is not an ideology which sits comfortably within a contemporary modern society. This is not something we will allow to occur. It is not free speech, it is promoting hate and it is promoting violence.

When we saw the images from Victoria recently on the steps of that parliament -

Ms Archer - The fact that it was on the place of democracy.

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes, obviously not lost on the community. Other states are moving to say this is completely unacceptable, the bigotry, the hatred, the fascist ideology you are promoting is not acceptable in 2023 in Australia. The fact that we are responding in such a unified way across the country gives us hope. The argument of free speech and that words do not hurt are false arguments to defend the kind of actions which occurred in the 1920s and 1930s and cannot be and shall not be repeated.

It is important for our communities and those minorities in our community who are threatened and legitimately feel very unsafe with the images and the gestures. Martin Luther King had a great saying, 'We remember not the words of our enemy, but the silence of our friends.' When we see these images, when we see these gestures, we have to stand up. We will not be silent and allow these things to be said and these gestures to be promoted in our community which we know are hurtful, which we know are offensive and which we know support an ideology which is the antithesis of what we are trying to encourage in Australia.

I commend the Government and acknowledge the previous speakers. The only question I have is the maximum penalties for a first offence. The member for Clark, Ms Haddad, raised this issue as well. They are lower for a first offence than in other jurisdictions. I am not going to impede the progress of this bill - I want it in as soon as possible - but could the minister explain why those first offence penalties in Tasmania are lower than in other jurisdictions: Victoria, New South Wales and the proposed bills in South Australia and ACT?

I commend the bill to the House.

[3.26 p.m.]

Ms ARCHER (Clark - Minister for Justice) - Mr Speaker, I probably will not get a chance to finish all my summing up, but it will not be difficult to ensure that we get to it again next week with such a short contribution required now, given members have indicated we will not be going into Committee.

In relation to that first point, because Ms Haddad asked it as well: all those submissions were considered by my department in response to the consultation on this which needed to be targeted consultation in particular with adding to this bill because of those other circumstances to which we have referred regarding gestures.

In relation to the penalties, they are done in the context of all our Tasmanian legislation and penalties. They are higher penalties than some existing offences, including both a fine and/or imprisonment. So that is higher than what is in the Police Offences Act. Like all bills, it is important to develop new penalties in the context of existing sentencing frameworks in Tasmania. We do not want to create interpretation difficulties when it is out of sync with other penalties. We tried to strike the right balance with this bill, which includes the penalties, looking at it in the context of Tasmania. I was very mindful of not having too high penalties for the first offence because I thought this House might have an issue with that. I believe it strikes the right balance.

There is another question from Ms Haddad in relation to the pink triangle and how specifically does the bill relate to the pink triangle. Some stakeholders were concerned that the consultation version of the bill would also prohibit displays that were against Nazism, including the pink triangle, which I said, and which has been reclaimed by the LGBTIQ+ community as a positive symbol of self-identity. Stakeholders also wanted to ensure symbols used to oppose Nazism were permitted. The bill was updated to incorporate this feedback. A specific, legitimate, public purpose was included where the symbol is displayed reasonably and in good faith for the purpose of opposing or demonstrating against fascism, Nazism, Neo-Nazism or other similar or related ideologies or beliefs. It is intended that this would cover placards with a cross through a Nazi symbol or wording to that effect.

Regarding the pink triangle, we consider that its display would either not be considered a Nazi symbol for the purposes of the bill since the symbol is no longer associated with the Nazis and that it would be considered display for the purpose of opposing or demonstrating against Nazism or display for another purpose that is in the public interest.

I am probably going to run out of time on this third question, which was about people who have historical items. It is acknowledged that people may have historical items that contain a Nazi symbol.

Mr Speaker, I will pick that up when we come back to this bill.

Debate adjourned.

MOTION

AFL Licence Agreements and Documents - Tabling

[3.30 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I move -

That the House orders that before the adjournment on Tuesday 30 June 2023 the Premier, the Honourable Jeremy Rockliff MP, table unredacted copies of all:

- (a) agreements and any associated documents pertaining to the deal to secure a Tasmanian AFL licence; and
- (b) advice from the Department of Treasury and Finance pertaining to the development of a new stadium in Hobart.

It has become evident that the need for transparency is not only driving our desire to get answers from the Government but has driven two members of the backbench to quit the Government. It is imperative today that the minority Liberal Government be transparent with the Tasmanian community and the Tasmanian taxpayers, who are the ones who are being asked to fund a billion-dollar stadium in Hobart, and provide all of the details that they have regarding any agreements they have struck with the AFL and any associated documents that have guided them in making a decision to allocate funding towards this project.

We understand, as of Sunday, some of the information that the Government has relied upon and this is based on the release of the agreement for club funding and development that was provided by the Premier. I point out to the House that there are large sections of that document that are still redacted and there are sections that are not available. In particular the ground occupancy agreement is not available for public scrutiny. It is a vital part of that agreement for us to have access to, given how divisive the stadium proposal that has been put forward and included in this agreement between the state Government and the AFL is, and how much public attention it has gained.

This motion has been drafted in such a way that it compels the Government to provide this level of detail to the House by 30 June. That allows time for the Government to go away today and gather that information and provide it back to the House next week. It is important that we have access to this. I will go through some of the further documents that we believe the Government has available that they can share. Ultimately, it is about making sure that the Government is true to its word. I heard what the Premier said when he stood up on the weekend: he said he was going to lead a transparent government. Today is an opportunity to test whether he is a man of his word. Is he going to be transparent and share the information that the parliament requests of him?

What we know so far is that Premier Jeremy Rockliff has signed a deal with the AFL where Tasmanian taxpayers take on all the risks. The liability for the AFL is capped; the contribution for the federal government is capped. The cost blowouts and the liability sit with the Tasmanian taxpayer. That is concerning at a time when we have a government talking about 'living within its means', which was a statement given yesterday by the Premier in response to a question he was asked. He was talking about a government living within its means. The Treasurer was talking about a 'tough budget situation', a surplus promise that will not be delivered and yet they are pushing ahead to debt fund the stadium at Macquarie Point because the AFL demanded they do so.

We know the debt servicing obligations for such an investment could be as much as \$50 million a year. That \$50 million could pay for 500 nurses every year or 500 teachers every year. Instead, the Government would prefer to use that money to pay off the debt - and pay off the interest at a time when interest rates are rising - of building a stadium that is deeply unpopular across the community.

It really called the community to question the priorities of this Government at a time when they are seeing in their own communities when they are heading to school and are walking past people who are camped in tents on the side of the road, living in their cars with their children, and then trying to access health care and being ramped at the hospital in an ambulance for hours. Then they see the Premier, who is also the Health minister, who must conveniently forget he is the Health minister half the time, make decisions about the investment in a stadium with taxpayer money at a time when it is clearly not the right priority and Tasmanians are going hungry, going without health care and going without a home.

What we do know about the information we have seen so far is that the Premier has signed a deal with the AFL where they can single-handedly terminate our licence after 12 years and we will be left with a billion-dollar stadium on Hobart's waterfront that will no longer have football played in it.

We are also aware, through the information that has been shared through the documents released to date, that the taxpayer is responsible for all the cost blowouts in the building and the financing of the stadium, that the AFL owns the licence, they appoint the chair, they control the board appointments and they also hold the majority of board positions. The deal means that Tasmanians take on all the risks and the AFL has all the control.

It still seems incomprehensible to me that the Premier could have signed a deal like this. Not only that, but that every single member of his Cabinet saw this deal, agreed with it and they think that this is a good deal for the taxpayer. It is not just the Premier who has got the minority Liberal Government into this mess. It is every single member of the Cabinet who sits there with him because they all stand by it, despite the overwhelming concern from our community and despite the fact that two members of his backbench quit, citing their concerns about transparency but also the debt that the state is going to be obligated to carry as a consequence of the Government's stubborn pursuit of a stadium.

It is no wonder that Premier Jeremy Rockliff kept this deal a secret for so long because it is such a bad deal. No wonder he was trying to hide it. It is one of the worst deals that this Government has ever done. The only deal that was worse was the deal done by Peter Gutwein to sign away Tasmania's GST. That takes a lot of beating but this one is right up there.

What we would like to see are all the other documents that are in the public's interest to see relating to this deal. As I have said, that includes all of the agreements and associated documents pertaining to the deal to secure a Tasmanian AFL licence. We also want to understand what the Treasury advice was that guided the Treasurer to agree to a deal like this, that guided the Cabinet in signing up to a deal like this, because there are significant implications for the Tasmanian Budget.

Our job in this place is to hold this Government to account and to make sure that there is a course correction. I may not agree with the course correction that the member for Lyons, Mr Tucker, would like to see the Government take, but there does need to be a course correction. They have the wrong priorities and they have a stadium mess.

Mr Speaker, when I take a look at the information that is publicly available which has been gained through right to information laws, publishing information that has not really been proactively shared by this Government, you can see that there is a whole lot of other information that should be in the public domain that is very important for us to understand as the community considers the merits of this project.

There is a right to information document published on the Department of State Growth website that lists a number of interactions between the state and different entities it has been briefing, as well as briefs that have been provided to members of the Cabinet as they attempt to answer queries about their stadium priority. One of the first things I will read from is a minute that went to the Premier on 2 September 2022 regarding the site selection. It says:

There are some long-term elements of the Macquarie Point precinct plan that are in early stages of development that will be disrupted if a stadium is to be established at the site. If Macquarie Point is the preferred location for a stadium -

which of course the Government has now stated it is:

a prompt decision will minimise the risks and costs to government to cease the arrangements in place, which will increase over time.

What exactly are those risks and costs to the Government? What are those arrangements that are in place? We know about the escarpment and the proponent that had been engaged to develop that \$110 million proposal to develop housing and a retail precinct, that has been knocked off by the Government.

They do not want to build houses at Macquarie Point. They want to build a stadium. What are the risks and the costs to the Government from having taken that decision? What about all the other small businesses that currently operate at Macquarie Point? What kind of risks and costs are there to Government because of the decision to identify that site for a stadium?

This is the information that is important to understand because these are the costs of the decision the Government has made. These are not things that are available but they are in the public interest because there are liabilities here that the taxpayer will have to fund.

We also know that in December 2022 you talked about the stadium costs and time lines in a document that was provided to the Premier in a briefing for a meeting that he had with Cricket Tasmania. In that document it says that the new stadium is \$750 million. That is a figure I would dispute, particularly because there has been no geotech, there has been no design and no examination of the site but we will come to that.

A construction date of mid to 2025 and a completion by the end of 2028. The cost estimate includes a fixed roof as well as site costs, construction costs, contract and client contingency costs, consultant fees, development and management fees, headwork contributions, allowances and future cost escalations. Therefore, the estimates are for the total development cost of the stadium. The Government thinks all of that will be \$750 million. How would we know? They have not done any of the work to guide that thinking. We know that because of other right to information requests that had been granted which demonstrate that the costings were really done on the back of an envelope.

Nonetheless, they press on with their \$750 million, which is not only going to build them a stadium but complete all of those site works, pay for all those consultants and deal with any cost escalations that may happen over that time too.

If you look further in this document you can see there are some other things that are important to note. There are details that the Tasmanian community deserves to see.

The Macquarie Point Development Corporation, which is a statutory authority supported by a board, is proposed to continue to remain in place to support the development of the project.

In this brief it identifies a number of different things that need to happen before a stadium can be constructed at this site. Transport is a key part of this discussion. It was interesting to hear the answer to the Independent member for Clark's question about the rail corridor and access to Macquarie Point. Through her interrogation of that she has uncovered that it will not go as far as Macquarie Point but in this briefing, it still did. This one says:

The northern transport corridor ends very close to Macquarie Point and will provide the means to transport thousands of people along an unused rail corridor whilst activating more high-density residential accommodation along the corridor within close proximity to the Hobart CBD.

This says it goes very close to Macquarie Point and will provide means to transport thousands of people along that corridor, indicating that it would not terminate at the centre of the city but would proceed to Macquarie Point. That now seems to be a different decision made by this Government.

What this document identifies is the number of documents the Government would have received that we would expect to be tabled if they are going to support this motion today and support transparency. Things such as:

The removal of a high voltage electricity cable running through the south-east corner of the site which needs to happen to enable the archaeological works to go ahead and to remove the cable that is no longer required to avoid impeding development in that area. Things like, information about any archaeological dig to inform the management of cultural heritage on the site. The later stage will commence in early 2023.

This was a document that was prepared for the Premier in December last year. It is now early 2023, so presumably that archaeological dig to inform management of cultural heritage on the site has occurred. That is the sort of information that should be tabled in response to this motion today to inform the communities' understanding of this project. It goes on:

The realignment of the Hobart sewer main which currently runs through the middle of the site. The design and pathway are underway to redirect the site running down Evans Street and along the western edge of the site. This work is being progressed, working with TasWater and TasPorts.

That is the sort of information that is important to understand, particularly given the very tight time lines the Premier has signed up to in his deal with the AFL. As we all know, the penalties for failing to meet those tight time lines are very burdensome on the Tasmanian taxpayer - \$4.5 million if they do not meet 50 per cent completion of the stadium by the first milestone date.

Further works that will support the development of the stadium at Macquarie Point include a revised site plan, which will be developed to support the development of a stadium. Early work underway includes: seeking planning advice on a complementary commercial and other uses around the site.

We would like to see that information.

Preparing key principles such as providing for public movement and access to the stadium from each of the four corners of the site.

Transport to and from this site is really important to understand. The community is already worried about traffic congestion in our city. The Government has dragged their feet for 10 years on activating the northern suburbs' rail corridor. Now they are talking about doing

something with it, but it is for such a short section. Given their track record on delivering infrastructure, it is unlikely that we are going to see any activation before a stadium is operational, if it ever gets built.

Where is an update on how they are going to move the public into and out of this project, including each of the four corners of the site. That is the sort of detailed document we expect to see, should this motion pass today.

The Government also has sought engineering advice and early design concepts to provide for an access road to the north of the site to provide for bus drop off areas.

Again, information that the community deserves to see and understand.

Themes for a series of interconnected precincts in each of the four corners of the site around the stadium.

Where is this information and why has the community not been told about this? There is supposed to be:

... a park with substantial public open space which is anticipated to be on the western end of the site, public access to the site including a cycleway and stairs to connect the site and raised Cenotaph area to the north of the site.

It is interesting. I have looked through these documents and I cannot see any real reference to the Cenotaph except for this point here which talks about a 'raised Cenotaph area to the north of the site'. What does that mean?

There is real concern from the RSL. They had their Congress on the weekend where 80 per cent of the members in attendance voted to not support the stadium at the current site. They are deeply worried about the impact on that culturally significant icon, the Cenotaph. There is no reference in this briefing note or the other briefing notes that we have been able to access through right to information about how the Government plans to protect that sacred site. The only reference here is that there will be some kind of public access to the site including a cycleway and stairs to connect the site, and a 'raised Cenotaph area to the north of the site'. What is that? These are the details the community is demanding to see, the RSL is demanding to see and that we expect to see with the support for this motion in this House today.

There is also work that has been done for archaeological digs to understand the site's history and prepare the relevant area for development. This is constrained to the western side of the site only.

Again, the community deserves to understand what those archaeological digs have uncovered because that is our state's history. The development of the precinct tells a story of this place. That is important to understand. It is not something that should be kept under wraps by the Government.

There is the demolition and clearing of the site to prepare for the stadium.

What works are required for that? What advice has the Government received? That is important to understand. All these things apparently are going to come in with that \$750 million cost envelope.

Then there are other projects to be delivered that are also included in these briefing notes. Remembering there is a sum of \$750 million, the Premier not only thinks he is going to build a stadium with but also all these other things.

There is the development of an Antarctic and science precinct, likely in the north-east corner of the site, car parking on site for other tenants and to support the operational needs of the stadium. Then, managing commercial arrangements with short- and longer-term tenants and discussions with developers -

Presumably with the developer who entered into goodwill negotiations with the Government just last year for a \$110 million development to build housing on the site, is now finding out, presumably like most of us did, through the media, that that will not be proceeding.

Those are the sorts of documents that we believe the community deserves to see, and that would be captured in the intent of the motion I am speaking to today. There is a pretty tight time line for this thing.

Included in the briefing notes provided, it talks about 'making it happen', the delivery time line, Mr Speaker. Pre-feasibility is 2022 and then in 2023, which is the calendar year we are currently in, there should be a master plan update and a concept design about now, about the middle of the year it looks like from this diagram. Where are those? Where is the concept design? Where is the master plan update? If they are going to progress this project on the time line that they have before us here, which is in this deal with serious penalties if they do not meet it, where is the concept design and where is the master plan update? This is the information the community should have before it and this parliament is demanding to see through this motion.

There is also other information the community deserves to see. It was raised today in a question in this House about the location for the high-performance training and administration centre - whether that would be at Cornelian Bay. We did not get a straight answer from the Premier - unsurprisingly, he does not like giving those anymore - but what we find in this briefing note which went to the Premier on 10 November 2022 and a briefing he gave to the Hobart City Council, is that:

The Tasmanian Government has worked closely with the AFL Taskforce to undertake a critical analysis of potential sites in the Greater Hobart area and to develop a preliminary master plan, including concept sketches and cost estimates for the preferred sites -

Redacted: so they have preferred sites, they are just not telling Tasmanians.

Where are the preferred sites for this? It is important to understand where the preferred site is for this because let me tell you what this site will include by way of infrastructure: a full-sized MCG-dimension oval and additional grass training areas; indoor training areas; high-performance training areas; office spaces facilities for football and administrative staff; player,

staff break and lounge facilities; treatment facilities; wet recovery facilities; and a gymnasium. That is a significant investment in infrastructure that is happening somewhere in the south of the state. The Government has identified some sites but they are keeping them secret.

The Premier today said that there would be consultation. Is that like the kind of consultation they have done around the Burnie Court relocation or the Westbury prison? Is that the kind of consultation they are talking about or is this actual consultation where they release the sites that they have identified, like they are doing with the youth justice facilities in the south of the state where they have actually provided the sites, engaging with the community and asking for their feedback? We do not know, Mr Speaker, because we do not have any information at all because it is all redacted.

That is the information this motion would require the Government to share. It goes directly to the deal with the AFL and it is important that the community understands what the Tasmanian taxpayer has been signed up to, but also, where something like that is going to be developed in the Hobart area.

The questions that we have, have also been asked in some other places. My colleague, the shadow sports minister, asked some questions around the borrowing costs associated with building the new stadium in the other place, as well as some of the costs associated with bringing matches to Tasmania each year to meet that 44 games to activate the state that underpin the business case, as bad as that business case is. Over a 20-year life, that business case shows the stadium loses \$300 million. As we know, the licence is only for 12 years, so perhaps an assessment of that should have been against the risk of only having 12 years for the stadium. Who knows? It seems like they are making it up as they go along.

The point I want to make is that the answer to the question asked by my colleague in the upper House about the total estimated borrowing costs that would be associated with the Tasmanian Government's contribution to the new Hobart stadium was answered like this:

The total estimated borrowing costs associated with the Tasmanian Government's contribution to the Hobart stadium will depend on several factors, such as the state's overall financial position at the time the funds are required, interest rates applicable at the time and also the timing of the payments to be made associated with the delivery of the stadium across a number of years -

so they do not really know but -

It is intended that the stadium will be funded from the public account.

A further question was asked regarding the 44 matches that will be important to underpin the business case for that stadium and whether or not there would have to be some kind of public subsidy to see them realise that. That was a very good question from my colleague because what it revealed - remembering that the Government said they would be bringing six A-league matches to Tasmania each year to play in that stadium - was that the estimated cost of bringing A-league games to Tasmania in the current market is \$100 000 to \$200 000 per game. They do not come here and play for free. The state has to entice them and they will have to do that six times at a cost of \$100 000 to \$200 000 a pop. That is important to understand in the context of how this business case for the stadium did not stack up in the first

place. Now you have the overlay of the agreement that has been signed with the AFL by the Premier and you see how much more problematic it becomes.

The other thing that underpins that business case is that they would be bringing seven NRL matches to Tasmania each year as part of the 44 events that are going to be played or hosted at the stadium. The answer to my colleague in the other place tells us that the estimated cost of bringing NRL games to Tasmania in the current market is \$300 000 to \$500 000 per game, and they have to do that seven times. That is not a cheap investment and that is also assuming that you are going to have the number of people go to these games that was presumed, so about 15 000 people going to an NRL game - that is what the case study showed us was underpinning the business case for the stadium in Hobart - not one time a year but seven times a year. So there were already serious question marks about this before the Government and the Premier trotted off to sign a deal with the AFL to build this stadium.

These are the sorts of things that need to be discussed in the public domain because the community deserves to understand the poor decision-making of this Government and the liability for the Tasmanian taxpayer in the deals the Premier has signed with Gill McLachlan that have been endorsed and seen and supported by every member of his Cabinet, including the Treasurer and the Sports minister.

Let us take a look at what we know about the deal which was released on the weekend, because what it tells us is that there is significant risk for the Tasmanian taxpayer. At this point, I remind anybody who might be listening - and of course Government members who are probably going to get up and I know exactly what they are going to say - is that we were on a unity ticket about getting a footy team for Tasmania. We have always supported Tasmania getting an AFL and AFLW team. It has been a desire for Tasmanian Labor for decades and we had a unity ticket with former premier Peter Gutwein. It was a tripartite agreement.

I went into a committee room just down the hall and was briefed by the task force who were preparing the bid to take to the AFL. They ran us through it and were very consultative. They showed us the business case for the team and the team stacks up on its own merits. They did not ask for a stadium. They were going for a team and we were right there with them. There was a unity ticket across this parliament for that and I believe the community was right there too at that moment. Everybody was excited and the task force came back and there was a bit of back and forth.

At every point we were involved. They were very consultative until about February 2022 and then it went a bit quiet. We were of the understanding that things were looking good. Things had gone quiet because things were looking good. We were very close to getting our team.

There was the state of the state address given by the former premier, Peter Gutwein, who has now quit, not just the parliament, but the Liberal Party. He stated that there would be a stadium. When did the deputy premier, who is now the Premier, know that was going to be announced? Did he see it on the front page of the paper and like us wonder where that idea had come from? We were not told about that. As members of the tripartite bid for us to get a footy team, there was no consultation with us about that.

Throughout 2022 there was denial that it was included as part of the bid. As late as September last year, the now Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, was saying that the team was not

contingent on a stadium. We deserve a team in our own right. The business case stacks up. We stood shoulder to shoulder with him in agreement, then there was a split, there was radio silence and there was a secret deal done.

We are now seeing parts of that secret deal, but we are not seeing all of it. There are parts that are redacted, there are parts that are not shared, and there is advice that we believe the Tasmanian community needs to understand, which would have been provided by Treasury, you would hope, given Cabinet signed off on it, that detailed the implications for the Tasmanian Budget, what it means for our debt position, what it means for debt servicing, and what the ongoing liability is for the Tasmanian taxpayer.

This is information that is important for us to all see. This document discloses the very serious obligations on the Tasmanian Government, which they have accepted, but which put all the risk and liability on the Tasmanian taxpayer. The unredacted parts of this principal agreement make it very clear that aside from a couple of small contributions from the AFL, \$15 million capital contribution to the stadium and about \$10 million to the high performance centre, all the funds are expected to come from the Commonwealth or the state. The Commonwealth has capped its contribution.

It is clear that the Tasmanian Premier has agreed that the costs and the risk to fully fund and design and build a stadium of this scale indicated in this document is borne by the Tasmanian taxpayer. That is what it tells us, yet there has been no design work done, there are no site works done. The documents we received through RTI requests shows there is a lot of preliminary work under way, but they are already slipping on their time line because there is no master plan being shared; no available design for that precinct.

This agreement makes it very plain that the state is on the hook for all the cost overruns. There are very serious concerns about what this means for the state's budget position. These concerns were raised by Mrs Alexander when she spoke about the reason she was quitting the Liberal Party. She made it clear in her contribution yesterday in this House, but also when she announced she was quitting the Liberal Party, that one of the reasons was because of the stadium, the lack of transparency about that deal, the concern she has for good budget management and that this Government has lost its way. I will read one of the statements she made on that Friday when she and Mr Tucker held a press conference. She said:

I guess that for a lot of Tasmanians, and for a lot of our constituents, the question is that we all started united as a state, supporting a team and then somewhere along the line it became a package with a stadium. I have not been able to understand where that came from? Where is the base of information where that decision was made? Who participated in that decision? So a number of questions in addition to the debt, in addition to the plan, and there is a number of questions that are unanswered, and a number of questions that have created this big anxiety and a split in our community, and I think people deserve to get an answer to all these genuine questions.

So do we. The parliament today has an opportunity to get some of those answers because it is in the community's interest to understand. Mr Tucker spoke on this issue in that Friday interview. He said:

It is overwhelming in our opinion that people are concerned about the debt and where things are headed and what our priorities are going forward. We want to ensure for the Tasmanian taxpayer that this stadium does not become a nightmare for them as we go forward in the future generations.

Mrs Alexander said more recently that the proposed shady deal to build a stadium in Hobart was sharply dividing the community. Mrs Alexander said:

If the AFL stadium deal has caused political turmoil the Premier has no one to blame but himself. He has refused to share details of the contracts he has signed with the AFL with his parliamentary colleagues, the parliament and the community.

That is why motions like this provide an opportunity to shine a bit of sunlight on what is going on in the Government, to allow for that transparency which we agree is vitally important. We are not talking about spending the Liberal Party's money here. This is taxpayer money. We are not talking about funding it from cash and equity. We are talking about debt funding it; we are talking about imposing a burden on future generations. It is vitally important that we properly scrutinise that and understand what that means. The obligation to fund that debt, to pay back with interest, could cost as much as \$50 million a year. That could pay for 500 nurses, 500 doctors or 500 teachers.

It is vitally important that we are sensible with our budget management and the allocation of public funds in this place. The motion is very straightforward. The opportunity before the parliament is very clear. On this side of the House we stand for a Tassie team but we also stand for transparency. It is time that the Premier started to be a man of his word and to provide that transparency. He stood up on the weekend and said he was going to lead a transparent Government. There is a brilliant opportunity for him right now to demonstrate that is exactly what he is doing.

The deal that he released was highly redacted. Release the unredacted elements too. Release the parts that are kept secret, the ground occupancy agreement. Release the supporting documents that have been redacted in the Right To Information documents that we have been able to access. Release the supporting information that the Cabinet has relied upon to make its decision. What advice was provided by Treasury? What does developing a new stadium in Hobart mean for the state's debt position?

It is a very straightforward motion. I look forward to the Government accepting it and agreeing to it. If they have nothing to hide there should not be a problem with it. Government transparency is more important than the commercial interests of the AFL. The Tasmanian taxpayer deserves to understand exactly what the Tasmanian Government, the Premier, on their behalf, has signed them up to. There can be no doubt this stadium is causing all kinds of tension and friction across the community and notably in the parliamentary Liberal Party, which has been plunged into minority because of its wrong priorities and this stadium mess.

I look forward to a contribution from whoever gets to their feet next from the Government benches and their agreement that it is in the public's interest to see this information and their agreement to fulfil their obligations under this motion and provide that advice by 30 June.

[4.09 p.m.]

Mr STREET (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Mr Speaker, I am pleased to be speaking on this Opposition motion today and to be able to talk about what is a great deal for the future of Tasmania. I truly believe that. I know that the Tasmanian Government is proud of the deal we have signed with the AFL in bringing AFL and AFLW teams to Tasmania. The AFL agreement and that Macquarie Point urban renewal project represent transformational opportunities that will benefit Tasmanians for generations to come.

The Tasmanian Government also understands the strong community interest in commercial arrangements of this nature, typically regarding disclosure. The starting position is that government agreements are disclosed whether routinely or on request. We worked closely with the AFL to ensure that we could release as much of the detail as possible and there can be no question about the transparency of this deal.

The agreement was subject to a commercially sensitive cooling off period which has now lapsed giving us the opportunity to release it. We have released close to the entirety of the club funding and development agreement to the public. It is clear what the conditions of the team are. All conditions that relate to the Tasmanian Government in the agreements have been provided unredacted.

The biggest condition is we need to build a stadium to support the long-term sustainability of the team which we have said all along. I have been clear in this place: I was clear yesterday and I have been clear previously as well, for all of the qualities that Blundstone Arena has it is not suitable for the long-term home hosting games for the AFL team of Tasmania. It also will not provide the financial stability that we need for this team. The stadium helps underpin the success of the team. The Tasmanian Government and the AFL are aligned in the need for the stadium.

It forms part of an integrated precinct at the nexus of Hobart's three transit corridors and close to the Hobart CBD, which will support broader urban renewal activities across Greater Hobart. It will have flow on-effects across the city and state, bringing jobs, investment confidence and attracting new events, business and tourism.

While we are keen to provide all the information we are able to, we do need to make amendments to this motion. We were clear in the disclosure notice on the released AFL agreement around why some parts were redacted and those reasons stand. However, we are keen to ensure members of this place are able to seek comfort that the redacted components are what we have made clear that they are.

We are proposing the following amendments to the motion.

Leave out all words after 'That the House'

Insert instead:

Orders the Premier, the honourable Jeremy Rockliff table:

- (1) All signed agreements and documents relating to the AFL agreement by Thursday 1 June 2023.

- (2) All departmental and departmental-commissioned assessments and reports relating to the Macquarie Point Stadium by Thursday 1 June 2023.
- (3) All minor redactions from the signed agreements be made confidentially available to all MPs at the earliest opportunity.

I will speak to all three of those points one by one.

First, as I have said we have released close to the entirety of the club funding and development agreement. All conditions that relate to the Tasmanian government in the agreements have been provided unredacted. As outlined on the disclosure page of the document the AFL and AFLW licence agreements and ground occupancy agreements have been redacted. Mr Speaker, you will know that the Tasmanian Government is not the signing party for either licence agreement. That will be the chairperson of the club.

The ground occupancy agreement remains subject to negotiation and is not considered final by the parties. For the benefit of the House, I will table the released document now.

Second, to the second point of our amendment. We will provide all departmental and departmental commissioned assessments and reports relating to the Macquarie Point stadium. We have been clear and we are still clear the Macquarie Point stadium is a condition of the Tasmanian AFL licence. I encourage all members to take the time to read these documents once provided that outline the unrivalled potential this will offer Tasmania.

Third, we are committed to providing all MPs the opportunity to view the minor redactions at the earliest opportunities. We are currently working with the Clerks of this place to determine the most appropriate way for that to be done.

The Tasmanian Government is confident in the agreement we have signed with the AFL. We look forward to the development of the stadium and the Tasmanian team finally taking the field. We know this development will bring arts and cultural events to Tasmania, including major concerts, conferences, exhibitions and sporting fixtures. Of course, this funding has helped secure our own AFL team and it will be critical to the team's long-term success.

Tasmania and Tasmanians deserve to have our own facilities and iconic inner city developments which not only attract people here but rival precincts that exist in all other capital cities across Australia. That is the key. Tasmanians deserve the right to aspire, dream and have all the opportunities of mainland Australians. The opposition is all that stands in the way.

The big unknown at this point is if Labor were to put our Tasmanian AFL team at risk and stop the stadium. Will they take our dream away and condemn our kids to never be able to represent Tasmania on the national stage in AFL football? Will they forego all the economic benefits of the team and the Macquarie Point Urban Renewal Project?

I was listening to Ms White's contribution. She has conveniently forgotten about her 2021 election commitment to build a new stadium in Hobart as well - 15 000 seats and no information about where it was going to be. She was talking about NRL and A-league content for the stadium. Where were the deals for AFL and NRL content or A-league content for her

rectangular stadium that she promised at the 2021 election? If Blundstone Arena is such a fantastic facility why did we need that new facility?

Will Labor continue to oppose the project that Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, the Deputy Prime Minister, Richard Marles and David O'Byrne all realise is a great thing for Tasmania. The Tasmanian people know the Government's plan. They know that we support a Tassie AFL team and the infrastructure that underpins it and they know that we are the party of aspiration and opportunity.

[4.16 p.m.]

Ms WHITE (Lyons - Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Speaker, I rise to speak on the amendment that has been moved by the minister. Whilst it is nice to see the Government come forward with something that is constructive, rather than just saying no, this still does not deal with the substantive concerns that we have about the parts of the deal that remain secret.

I will start at the top. It says:

- (1) All signed agreements and documents relating to the AFL agreement by Thursday 1 June 2023.

The minister indicated that there were some deals that will not be released because they will not be signed by the Government, they will be signed by the chair. As we know, the AFL appoints the chair so basically their deal is signed between the AFL and itself. I am sure that they include some kind of responsibility for the Tasmanian Government or some kind of obligation or liability, and we should be able to see those things.

- (2) All departmental and departmental-commissioned assessments and reports relating to the Macquarie Point stadium by Thursday 1 June 2023.

What we were asking for is what advice had been provided by Treasury that guided the thinking of the Government to sign a deal like this? That will not be captured in the Government's amendment. They are deliberately carving out any obligation this parliament might ask of them to share Treasury information or advice. That is important to understand. One of the biggest concerns we have, a concern that is shared by Mrs Alexander and Mr Tucker, is the impact on the Budget and the debt financing obligations, not just on this parliament but on future generations. The only way that we can really thoroughly understand that is to have the information the Government is relying on to sign a deal like this to see what the impact on the Budget will be. Point (2) in this amendment is inadequate because we have seen some of the departmental commissioned assessments that they have engaged consultants to provide. It includes things like a really bad business case. It does not stack up.

Ms O'Connor - Be kind, it has a nice cover.

Ms White - Yes, it has a pretty picture. This Government is very good at pretty pictures, I will give them that.

That is the standard of report the Government has relied upon to this point to make a decision around the stadium. It has holes all through it. There are lots of things that we need to see. I named a number of them and I am not going to go back through and detail those things

again but those are the types of documents we want to see. We want to see what those assessments tell the Government but also what advice they have received about the impact on the budget.

- (3) All minor redactions from the signed agreements be made confidentially available to all MPs at the earliest opportunity.

I have two problems with this one. What is the definition of a minor redaction? It is an important question to ask. Even in the document that had been released, guess what one of the things is that has been redacted? The definitions. The Government cannot even share with us the definitions in this deal they have signed with the AFL and yet they want us to believe that they are going to share with us all minor redactions without defining what that might include. I do not buy it for a second.

The second thing that concerns me is about this is that those documents will only be provided to members of parliament confidentially. That means that only members of parliament in this place get to see this at this point in time. We represent our community but we are demanding that everybody in our community understands what the Tasmanian Government has signed them up to on their behalf. They are the taxpayers of this state. They are the voters of this state. They deserve to see what decisions the Government is making on their behalf, so an in-camera briefing for members of parliament on 'minor' redactions, whatever they may be, is not going to cut it.

Therefore we will not be supporting this amendment and anyone who supports transparency should not support this amendment either.

[4.20 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, we have some significant issues with the amendment. Of course we support the original motion tabled and debated by the Leader of the Opposition. I suspect that this is two things: one, another sign of the Rockliff minority Government's adjustment problems - they are a bit maladjusted at the moment because they are struggling with the new reality; and the second is a desire to hide Treasury and Finance advice in relation to this project.

On point (3) of the Government's amendment, the first obvious thing that sticks out is all 'minor' redactions and as Ms White said, there are some really major redactions in this document, including schedule 5, the licence agreement and the definitions and interpretation, where nearly two full pages are blacked out. There are minor redactions there that include, for example, contact details of someone in the Department of State Growth, contact details of someone in the AFL. How minor redactions might illuminate anything is beyond us. However, I will say - and I said this on radio the other day - the Greens will not be part of in-camera briefings about the licence agreement, the stadium agreement and the agreement for the high-performance centre. We do not regard ourselves as separate and above the people who put us here and we will not be captured by being privy to allegedly commercial-in-confidence information that we therefore cannot talk about or refer to and may have to conceal from the people who put us here. We do not support the Government's amendments.

I note that they brought the time frame forward from 30 June to 1 June, and I did wonder about if 30 June was right because we are not sitting.

Ms White - It might have been a typo, I think; it is meant to say 30 May.

Ms O'CONNOR - We did not hear the argument from Mr Street for why it needed to be amended in this way. We did not hear from Mr Street why the clause in Labor's motion that seeks to obtain the advice from Treasury and Finance has been removed. The departmental and departmental-commissioned assessments and reports relating to the Macquarie Point stadium I think will already be largely publicly available, embarrassing as they should be for the Government and Kim Evans' Department of State Growth, because this business case is one of the most laughably weak I have ever seen, and I have seen a few. Imagine comparing a stadium at Macquarie Point to MONA, which it does.

I might just pause there for a moment and say it is the ultimate hubris for this now minority Liberal Government to claim credit for the changes that have happened in Tasmania over not just the last nine years - they have been happening for the last 20 or 30 years. One of the most catalytic developments that changed the way Tasmanians feel about themselves and the way the mainland and the rest of the world views us is David Walsh's MONA, and that had nothing at all to do with the Liberals. It had pretty much nothing to do with anyone in politics because David Walsh did his own thing. I am agnostic about he obtained his money - he gambled principally on horses - but in doing that he gave us a great gift that has changed the fabric of our society. It has created events that make huge contributions to our economy in Dark Mofo and MONA FOMA, and that has come from a single individual who has invested his own money into terraforming thousands of tonnes of rock at the former Moorilla Estate vineyard at Berriedale and created something of which we can and should all be proud.

To compare a stadium that so far looks like a bedpan on Macquarie Point to MONA is hubris and that is what is in this business case. It says it would be a critical infrastructure project that provides an imaginative solution for Tasmania, similar to the impact that MONA had in providing Australians and people from across the world with a reason to come here, stay here, spend here and taste everything that is good about Tasmania and Australia.

First of all, a new stadium is not critical infrastructure. What is critical infrastructure is social and affordable housing and investing in the infrastructure we have, improving it, upgrading it and ruggedising it, in order for it to be able to withstand some of the climatic and weather extreme shocks that are coming. Hopefully no-one in this place has forgotten the recent floods which took out bridges and roads in Tasmania and cut off communities because our infrastructure is simply not up to the job. If you want to talk about critical infrastructure, it is our existing infrastructure which really needs some work and attention.

This business case just pulls numbers out of the ether. It says that it will strengthen Tasmania's economy, delivering a \$2.2 billion in economic activity over 25 years. Then the carrot is dangled, the trickle-down is dangled, where we are told that this will provide more opportunity to invest in schools, hospitals, roads, social housing and future critical infrastructure projects. Yes, maybe, Mr Speaker, but we also know from this business case as well that that stadium will lose taxpayers in the order of \$306 million over 20 years.

This laughably optimistic business case, which I am sure would be captured by clause (2) in the amendment, also makes the callous claim that a 3 per cent to 4 per cent increase in house prices is a social benefit. Mr Speaker, it most certainly is not. If we have a class system in Australia it is the class system created by property ownership. There are people who own property, there are people who do not, and some never will. To state in a government document

as part of your pitch for why it might be a good idea to have a brand-new stadium that house prices will go up, in a town that has the most savage rental market and the lowest vacancy rates in the country, goes to show how out of touch this Government and some of those people in State Growth really are. It is a pathetic business case.

We will not be supporting the amendment. It is unfortunate that the Government felt it had to move this. Obviously I do not know how the new Independents will vote on this amendment and the original motion, but unless the Government has coordinated and got an agreement from the new Independents that they were not going to support the Opposition's motion, this is a risky strategy again. I understand that after this morning's vote on a procedural motion that did not go the Government's way, there were some very angry and bewildered senior ministers in the building -

Mr Winter - Is that right? Can you go any further with this?

Ms O'CONNOR - No, probably not. It is probably not wise. You know that it is hard to cope with loss of control -

Mr Winter - Transparency, Leader of the Greens, come on, be transparent.

Ms O'CONNOR - Transparency is nice but you know we are dealing with the Government that has a form of political incontinence at the moment. They do not have control of this place and it is causing some difficulties.

That was a slightly longwinded way of saying unless the new Independents - hello, Mr Tucker - have agreed not to support Labor's motion, and to support the Government's motion, I do not think it would be a wise move for the Government to seek to amend it. If the new Independents, who have stated and restated their commitment to transparency in Government, accept the Government's amendment, then that would mean that the House does not see the Treasury's costings and advice, and that would not be transparent.

There was already, I thought, an understanding that there had been an offer made by the Premier that those commercial-in-confidence alleged sections might be made available in camera, so that to me would be sort of implicit potentially in accepting Labor's motion, but this House should see the advice from Treasury and Finance. State servants in a publicly funded agency, who oversee the purse strings, who have a deep understanding of the level of net debt, GST shortfalls, I am not sure what keeps Tony Ferrall awake at night, but as the secretary of Treasury -

Mr Ellis - A Labor-Greens government, I suspect.

Ms O'CONNOR - Well, I bet you are wrong, Mr Ellis, because Tony Ferrall worked with us when we were in government and he was an excellent deputy secretary for Treasury and Finance, an apolitical bureaucrat who will work with any team of people who are elected in a democracy. I think you have smeared Mr Ferrall in saying that, and suggested in some way that he is a politicised bureaucrat. We have been very fortunate, I think all of us, and all of Tasmania, to have Mr Tony Ferrall as the secretary of Treasury and Finance. He has always been highly professional, straight up and down, and he will work until he leaves later this year. Good luck to him. He would work with any group of people who had been elected to a democratic parliament.

Before I was rudely interjected on, I think that one of the things that might keep a secretary to Treasury awake at night is an understanding of spiralling, out-of-control finances into the red and that is where we are. I cannot see it is going to get much better anytime soon, which is part of the reason that the majority of Tasmanians who have been polled do not support the stadium. They recognise it is a lost opportunity to invest in housing, but also, that it would saddle generations of Tasmanians with a massive debt.

Interestingly, I do not normally pay too much attention to polling, but I have played a fair bit of attention to today's ERMS poll. Rarely do you see such evidence of cause and effect in a set of polling numbers. We have seen, aligned with the push for a stadium, a billion dollar-plus stadium, which is what it will be, support for the Liberal minority Government fall sharply. We have seen support for Labor, Greens and Independents increase. These are all part of the political landscape who have been strong in opposition to the stadium and we have seen for the first time I can recall ERMS polling the current Leader of the Opposition out-pipping the Premier as preferred Premier.

There is an old cliché that the only poll that matters is on election day. However, that ERMS poll is a pretty good reflection of how people broadly are feeling about what they have been offered by the Premier and his diminished team.

If they are not just stopping to have a bit of a think about the wisdom of the path they have set themselves and the rest of us on, then they are foolish. There should be a capacity to get some business hardheads in and renegotiate that deal with the AFL. Perhaps we would have to wait until Mr McLachlan leaves as CEO, which I believe is happening about mid-year. I do not know, but, that stadium so far has cost the Premier the stability of majority of numbers in this place. What a price for him to pay: a massively self-inflicted political wound.

We are not going to support the Government's amendment because it is designed to create a less transparent document production process. Is it not terrific that we have got the capacity now for a motion to be put forth to order the production of documents where we might actually get to see those documents. The Greens for example have tabled a motion for the House to see all documents related to Marinus Link as well, and, we think the Government should not have a problem with that. We have been subject to minister Barnett's spin and lofty claims for some years now. To see those documents would be beneficial to transparency and to the understanding that the members of this place have about the consequences of the Marinus costs, and also, more broadly to have a more honest conversation with the Tasmanian community about Marinus Link.

We have moved that the House order the Government to table the funding agreement for Marinus Link between the Tasmanian, Victorian and Australian Governments announced in October 2022, including the total dollar figure for Tasmania's share of equity in the project and the concessional interest rate agreed for the loan between the Commonwealth and Tasmania: for any other agreements in relation to Marinus Link where a Tasmanian government or a Tasmanian government business enterprise is a signatory; for the most recent projected costings for each Battery of the Nation, Marinus Link and North West Transmission Extension and for the timetable for investment decisions and contracts on the tenders for the cables and converter stations associated with Marinus Link.

We understand that TasNetworks is putting out tenders associated with a project which is not yet funded or approved or has been through any kind of assessment process.

We understand that there are conversations happening with farmers along the transmission route. There are respectful conversations happening but there is an implicit threat there - a belief on the part of some people working on the Marinus Project or working in TasNetworks that -

Mr WINTER - Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker, Standing Order 151, relevance. This only has a short amount of time. I am interested in other members. We are on the amendment and the Leader of the Greens is speaking about Marinus.

Ms O'CONNOR - We are talking about transparency. All you need to do is say to me you would like to have a go and would like to hear from Mr Tucker.

Mr Winter - I would, yes.

Ms O'CONNOR - Okay. That is all you needed to do.

Mr Winter - I was using the Standing Orders.

Ms O'CONNOR - That is fine. I am very reasonable in real life. These are issues that the House should be able to flesh out. We are not going to support the amendment. We will support Labor's original motion and hope the House does too because Tasmanians deserve transparency over this stadium.

[4.41 p.m.]

Mr WINTER (Franklin) - Mr Deputy Speaker, on the amendment I will make a couple of points. This amendment is designed to preserve transparency for elected members but not for the public. The original motion as intended provides transparency for Tasmanians, which I think is what this House wants to be about and what I heard the new Independents speak about.

The proposed amendment here talks about transparency for politicians, for us. I do not have a lot of interest in going into an in-camera session, finding out these answers and then not being able to explain this deal to anyone. There is immense and serious interest in this matter and I do not want to have to find out the answers and then not be able to tell anyone about it. That is not much use to me, and it is not much use to Tasmanians.

The other point is that the withdrawal of the Treasury advice from the amendment indicates to me, as I suspected, that there is Treasury advice about this stadium that the Government does not want to make public. That indicates to me that Treasury may have concerns about this deal. If that is the case, I want to know about it because this Government is desperate for this House to make a decision about this. If the House is to make a decision it should have all the information in front of it. That is not just the design, not just the impact on the Cenotaph, it is also about the financials and the sustainability of it. That goes further than just a business case, particularly how it pertains to Treasury and to the budget.

We do not support this amendment because it takes away from the transparency that was intended in the original motion. I implore the House to support transparency for Tasmanians and vote against the amendment.

[4.43 p.m.]

Mr TUCKER (Lyons) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I am conscious of time. I will be supporting the amendment following my discussions with the Government on this and with the agreement that I have with the Premier. I would like to read out part of the agreement:

The AFL agreement is to be published as soon as possible, subject to confidentiality requirements and any material not published will be provided to members of parliament on an in-camera basis.

The idea around changing it from 'Treasury' to 'departmental and departmental-commissioned assessments and reports' was to broaden what we covered with this.

I believe that what is in this motion will provide what we need to do. I will give an assurance to the parliament that if we do not get everything we do need I am more than prepared to stand up and ask for that information. I am not frightened, as you have seen today, and if I do not think the Government has provided us everything I will stand up. I will also say, especially after hearing Mr Winter's comments, grow a backbone, make a decision. Sometimes you cannot go out in the public and disclose commercial-in-confidence facts to everyone on the street. You are privileged in being in this parliament and you are here to make decisions for Tasmanian people. If you are not prepared to stand up, grow a backbone and make a decision on the facts that you have, do not sit here in this parliament.

It is no different when I was on council and you have been on council, Mr Winter. When you got up and did planning decisions, there were things you could not release to the public but you had to go out and make decisions. I think back to a comment my father made to me. He said, 'you make the best decision for the community with the facts that are in front of you'. Sometimes you cannot release that information to the public. People will get stuck into you as you go up the street, but two years down the track they will pat you on the back and say, 'As things come out I now understand why you made that decision'.

Do not try to say you need to release all the commercial-in-confidence information to the public, to crab walk away from actually making a decision. I am conscious of time and I know there are a couple more speakers to get up. I will be supporting these amendments but I will be also putting the Government on notice: if I do not get all that information, I will be requesting that information. I think they are very clear on this but I am saying to the Opposition, grow a backbone and make a decision. Just because it is commercial-in-confidence does not mean you cannot make a decision.

[4.47 p.m.]

Ms JOHNSTON (Clark) - Mr Deputy Speaker, for the reasons outlined by the Opposition Leader I will be supporting the substantive motion but I will not be supporting the amendment. I have some grave concerns about the vagueness of what a 'minor redaction' is. There is no definition of that. The most important thing I have concerns about is the limitation on the information that will be released if this amendment was accepted. The Opposition Leader has quite clearly articulated all the various documents that might be attached to this deal in various forms. It is important that not only the privileged people who sit in this parliament get to see that but given the size of investment, the legacy this will leave Tasmanians, the debt it will burden future generations with, that all Tasmanians get to see this.

I am concerned about the quarantining of confidential information, whatever that might be, in those minor redactions that we will see as members of parliament. It is our job to scrutinise and hold the Government to account. Part of that is being able to ask questions of the Government and hold them to account. The forum for doing that is in question time, a public forum. My concern is that if information is given to members of parliament confidentially and it turns out this is something that is really important to Tasmanians and it is critical for them to understand the impact of that, the only opportunity we would have to ask questions about it would be in question time, but we are bound by a confidentiality agreement. It makes no sense.

We would know what the bad terms and agreements are but we cannot hold the Government to account. It defeats the purpose of having the documents in the first place if we cannot question the Government on that particular matter. As Mr Tucker suggested for Mr Winter, it is not just about telling Tasmanians what is in those documents, it is about holding them to account. That is what matters to me. A bad term or a bad agreement is a bad term or bad agreement whether it is confidential or not. It is our job to question the Government about that. If we cannot do that because it is confidential, we have only received it in-camera, then we are not doing our jobs. I beg my fellow crossbench colleagues in the last few minutes before this debate concludes to reconsider their position, particularly around the confidentiality issue.

I understand that sometimes governments enter into commercial-in-confidence arrangements, but we are talking about a significant deal that will affect all Tasmanians; a lot of taxpayers' money. We would be fettering our ability to do our job in here if we accept this amendment because we will not be able to ask questions on it.

There are significant redactions to the deal that have already been disclosed. Schedule 6 disappeared. I believe that is the ground occupancy agreement. I am sure our Tasmanian community want to know the answer to that. I am sure they would expect me to ask questions about what is contained in that agreement but if this amendment is accepted I cannot do that. I cannot do my job. I urge the crossbench members to reject the amendment and to support the original motion proposed by the Labor Opposition. That is a responsible motion that will provide Tasmanians with the opportunity to have transparency and, most importantly, accountability and for us to do our job.

[4.50 p.m.]

Mrs ALEXANDER (Bass) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I have a concern around moving unredacted documents to the public domain because I am not sure what message we would be sending to other people wanting to do business in Tasmania. That is primarily my main concern. The idea of moving some really specific contractual understandings and commercial-in-confidence to members of parliament, in the first instance when we do not know what may come out of the observation when members of parliament are given the opportunity to scrutinise the document.

It may well be that there is a next step. It may well be that some of the information will be presented and explained and the opportunity to ask questions based on receiving the full information will allow for that transparency and opportunity to question the Government. That was my hope whilst trying to prevent and protect the commercial-in-confidence concept which is very much applicable outside in normal circumstances and may frighten businesses coming to Tasmania and doing business with the Government if circumstances of complete publicity and complete public information would happen in this way. Because of the competitive nature

of some of the dealings, people could say that they would feel legally exposed if this was to occur again.

This is where my biggest conundrum is around releasing it all to the public domain. Although some people would genuinely look at the information and say, 'Yes, let's look at it', it could potentially come back to bite us as a state in creating quite a dangerous precedent. My concern is with the precedent that we may be creating in releasing straight outright the whole commercial-in-confidence information to the public. I am saying that briefing the MPs in-camera gives an opportunity for the discussion to evolve from there and the opportunity for the MPs to question the Government based on the information they are receiving. Maybe there is another step after that once the full commercial information has been disclosed.

My biggest fear is that we are jeopardising our position as a state in terms of entering into other agreements with various businesses and companies that will be afraid of doing business with the state. Point (2) says:

All departmental and departmental-commissioned assessments and reports relating to the Macquarie Point Stadium by Thursday 1 June.

It was my understanding that the Government changed from specific Treasury to 'department and departmental commissioned' because the information may come from State Growth when they are preparing the data -

Mr Winter - If you want to amend the amendment, insert the word 'advice' after assessments, advice and reports. That is what is missing here; that is what has been withdrawn.

Mrs ALEXANDER - Advice and reports.

Mr Winter - The word 'advice' is what was in the original motion. You would get the Treasury advice if you added advice to part (2).

Mrs ALEXANDER - Mr Winter, you are suggesting that all departmental and departmental commissioned assessments and 'advice' after assessments.

Mr Winter - Yes.

Ms O'Connor - It needs to be in writing, Mrs Alexander, to move that amendment.

Mrs ALEXANDER - I understand that. I think we have a bit of a conundrum here with this motion again. I understand and I agree with that part of it but, in relation to department to department commission, I think the intention was to broaden from not just the Treasury but to include State Growth as well or any other department that may have been feeding information into the Treasury assessment. It was my understanding that it would not be confined to Treasury, but by putting departmental commissioned assessments it may feed in from State Growth and other departments.

Mr Winter - I understand your argument but the word that was in the original motion is 'advice', so, Treasury advice and 'advice' is not in amendment. If you were to do an amendment and add the word 'advice', that might actually pick up Treasury advice as well as all of the other advice. Just a suggestion.

Mrs ALEXANDER - Basically, the suggestion would be to amend it to all departmental commission assessments and advice. Then, by adding the word 'advice' it will encapsulate the Government's original intent of the motion.

Mr Winter - Is that right, Mr Street?

Mr Street - I am more than comfortable with the amendment as we moved it. The intention is to broaden it, not to narrow it from Treasury. It was the advice I was given.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Can I remind everybody to speak through the Chair, please? I ask Mrs Alexander to continue.

Mrs ALEXANDER - At this stage, based on this discussion, it is all about collaboration. I would dearly love to see a motion that satisfies everyone in the room. At the end of the day the ultimate outcome is that we are trying to get to a point where we all agree on where we want to land.

There are two aspects. The first aspect I have talked about around the protection of commercial-in-confidence because of my fear that we will be weakening our state position in entering into future contracts.

There is the second point that we just discussed about introducing the word 'advice' after assessment. On a personal preference, I would like to introduce the word 'advice'. I am not sure how we go from here because I do not have the experience with these things.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - You need to move that amendment.

Mrs ALEXANDER - Mr Deputy Speaker, I move the following amendment to the amendment:

Insert in paragraph (2) after the word 'assessments' the word 'advice'.

Mr Street - It needs to be provided in writing.

Ms White - It is. Mrs Alexander has it in writing. I remind you that the Government only provided one copy earlier, so this is consistent.

Mr Street - What? I beg your pardon.

Ms White - You did.

Mr Street - We provided eight copies.

Ms White - Mr Ferguson did not when he amended the motion that we dealt with on Estimates.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Mrs Alexander, if you could hand the amendment to the Clerk, please.

Mrs ALEXANDER - Mr Deputy Speaker, these were my points. Now I have provided that amendment effectively introducing the word 'advice' in conjunction with assessment that is pretty much my contribution to this. I am not sure what we do from here.

Time expired.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

Ms O'Connor - I think this is the brave new world. It is showing that we can get a result through negotiation and cooperation and goodwill across the floor. We did not have to have a division and nobody got into trouble. Mrs Alexander has made her first amendment on the fly and I am sure it will not be the last.

MOTION

Short Stay Accommodation - Motion Negatived

[5.01 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I move -

That the House calls on the Government to, as soon as practicable, amend 'Planning Directive No. 6' and such elements of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme as would enable Councils to prohibit listing of whole properties as short stay accommodation, and to report progress to Parliament no later than 8 August 2023.

We are moving this in the last private member's time before the winter break because we recognise that there is an opportunity for this House to take an immediate step that would give councils some capacity to rein in short-stay listings which are ballooning around the state. This is a measure councils have called for. As we know, short-stay accommodation is one of the contributors towards the rental affordability and availability crisis that we are dealing with today as a Tasmanian Parliament. Something has to give.

It is not good enough to have the Deputy Premier and Planning minister say words to the effect that 'this Government is not in the business of telling private property owners what to do with their properties'. At a philosophical neo-conservative level that might be acceptable, but government on a whole range of levels inserts itself into the lives and the finances of people. You cannot have a situation where you have investors buying up nearly whole streets of residential properties and then putting them on short-stay and councils having their hands tied behind their backs so that they just have to give a tick.

It is déjà vu all over again in this place, because in 2018, also in a notionally power-sharing parliament with the former Speaker of the House, Sue Hickey, in the chair, we moved for the Government to place a moratorium on new permits in residential zones for visitor accommodation to make visitor accommodation and existing dwellings a discretionary use, and to give councils the capacity to look at housing availability and affordability in their

performance criteria, and have a look at the mix in their municipalities. We called on the Government to commit resources towards enforcing compliance with visitor accommodation rules, including operating without a permit where a permit is required. Now, regrettably, although the then Speaker said she wanted to be part of a big, brave, bold and accountable parliament, it was Sue Hickey's vote that killed this motion. Former Labor member for Franklin, Ms Standen and I were on the housing affordability committee together. Ms Standen made a really strong case in the debate for supporting our motion. The then Housing minister, Mr Jaensch moved an amendment that killed our amendment and really only provided a capacity for government to obtain data. It was a data system that was agreed to.

Let us have a look at the latest data collected by the Office of Consumer, Building and Occupational Services. It shows that across Tasmania there are 5748 short-stay premises and 2968 of those are whole homes.. Almost 3000 entire homes have been removed completely from the rental market. In the greater Hobart area the number of properties in 2018, when we last tried to put some restraint on short stays, was 1993 properties, according to University of Tasmania data. Now there are 2379. There has been an increase of almost 400 properties being taken out of the rental market and put on to short-stay. When the COVID-19 period was at its most intense and we pulled up the drawbridge, about 100 whole homes from within the Hobart LGA went back into the rental market. You saw within the space of a short period of time, months, rents drop by nine per cent.

We are in the most savage and unaffordable rental market in the country, with the lowest vacancy rate. In Hobart and Launceston rents have gone up by 50 per cent in the past five years. In some cases, for our constituents rents have gone up by 70 or 80 or 100 per cent and more. That is pricing Tasmanians out of their own paradise. It is putting enormous stress on low-income families and it is ensuring that choices are being made by those families about what they can and cannot afford.

Our motion is not designed to be a blunt instrument, anti-short-stay. We recognise there is an important place for short-stay accommodation in the tourism mix. What has happened here is, because you have a Government that has refused to regulate short-stay, it is out of control. It is our people, the people we represent, who are paying the price for mainland and overseas investors who are buying up properties and putting them straight onto short-stay because they can make more money out of them.

In greater Hobart, there are 2379 total listings, 858 of which are not in full or part a primary residence. For the greater Launceston area, it is 1000 total listings and 543 of them are whole homes. Shelter Tasmania's 2022 assessment found two-thirds of Launceston short-stay properties used to be in the long-term rental market.

On 21 March 2022, Hobart City Council attempted to amend its interim planning scheme to prohibit whole homes from being used as short stay accommodation in the general residential zone, in a residential zone and low density residential zone. The Tasmanian Planning Commission ruled -

With the ongoing application of Planning Directive 6 to the interim planning scheme, any such amendment if it were to be approved, would continue to be inconsistent with the requirements of planning directive 6 and thus the amendment could not achieve the planning controls, outcomes that the planning authority seeks.

We have a situation right now where through the refusal to act by this Planning minister we have councils with their hands tied firmly behind their backs with very little capacity to have any kind of balancing control on the mix of properties that are in the short-stay market.

If it were to pass today, our motion would allow councils who are the planning authorities to prohibit the listing of whole homes as short-stay accommodation and it would provide councils with the discretion that they have been calling for and those calls have fallen on Mr Ferguson's deaf ears. We do not understand why the Planning minister is so obdurate about this. I know we have had a whack of him about being a short-stay property owner, which he is and which the Premier is, and it is difficult not to see that that conflicts him in his decision-making. He might bristle when we say that to him but it is a fact that Mr Ferguson profits from short-stay accommodation and arguably from an unregulated market. We would like this House to help councils get more capacity to contribute towards a kinder and fairer rental market, particularly given that it is so tight now.

We have here, to all members of the House of Assembly, a supportive letter for what we are trying to do today from the Tenants' Union of Tasmania, TasCOSS and Shelter Tasmania. They point to what the previous Housing and Planning minister, Mr Jaensch, did when we moved on this last time, five years ago. The Government then committed to obtain reliable data in order to assess the impact of short-stay visitor accommodation in Tasmania. We now have the data. We know the impact is significant. We know it is impacting on the lives, not just of low-income families, it is impacting on middle income families and also on people who are skilled professionals and tradespeople who move here from interstate and cannot find a place to call home. The data now is oxygen clear. The data the Government wanted in order to inform its decision-making is now available and yet still we have inaction.

We may hear the minister get up and say, 'Here you are, you are at it again. You know that the solution to the housing crisis is to increase supply'. It is so glib. It is so offensive to people who right now are facing the prospect of spending more than half their income on rent or living in a car or moving to the mainland, which would be a travesty. It is not enough to have a far-off goal of increasing supply. There are multiple levers that this parliament can pull and one of them is to give councils some discretion over short-stay listings. That would pretty quickly ease some pressure on the private rental market.

Fundamentally, government and maybe neo-conservatives view it differently but there is a key role for government in providing housing for people. In recent years, we have seen a crab walk away from that to the point now where we have a federal Labor government that thinks it is good public policy to gamble \$10 billion of public funding on the stock market in order to fund housing builds -

Ms Haddad - You know that is not true.

Ms O'CONNOR - It is true.

Ms Haddad - It is the same as a superannuation fund. Is that a gamble on the stock market?

Ms O'CONNOR - I put this to you: would we gamble the money that we spend funding hospitals on the stock market?

Ms Haddad - It is completely untrue to call it a gamble. It is completely untrue and disingenuous to call it a gamble.

Ms O'CONNOR - It is not, it is not completely untrue. I believe Max Chandler-Mather on this issue over you, Ms Haddad, because he has been working on this intensely in the federal parliament as an Australian Greens representative for some months now. There is no way the Greens would be voting against good housing legislation. What is on the table now is not good housing legislation. It would deliver to Tasmania in the order of perhaps, depending on how the stock market is going, \$10 million or \$11 million per year to increase supply. Under the former Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, when I was minister, we were receiving from the Commonwealth between \$17 million and \$18 million per year to increase supply -

Ms Haddad - Twenty years ago.

Ms O'CONNOR - Ten years ago.

Ms Haddad - This is not replacing that funding, it would continue. It would be in addition to that funding.

Ms O'CONNOR - It is pathetic. It is a Morrison government policy that the Albanese Government has adopted. That tells us everything we need to know.

The Greens are not claiming that in making this move, we are going to solve the housing crisis. We know that it is complex. There are federal, state and local jurisdictional responsibilities. We are not going to solve them all here today. There is not enough money coming from federal and state governments to build more social housing for people because there has been a walk away from social housing

This move, the need for which has been made obvious by the Planning Commission decision, would give councils at least some capacity. They should have been given it years ago. I encourage members to have a look at the *Hansard* of the debate where Sue Hickey killed our hopes and dreams of getting some restraint on short-stay. Then the minister said we need the data first. That was five years ago.

As the letter from the community stakeholders makes clear, the Government voted against a moratorium on short-stay accommodation, but passed an amendment, moved by the then Minister for Housing which called for the implementation of reliable data to assess the impact of short-stay accommodation in Tasmania.

The Government's data now says that entire property, whole-home, short-stay accommodation across Tasmania has increased by 38 per cent since 2018, from 1713 properties to 2371. In the Launceston municipality, the number of entire short-stay homes has increased by 44 per cent. There are now 278 whole homes taken out of the rental market in Launceston.

Dr Woodruff - Shame.

Ms O'CONNOR - That is right, Dr Woodruff. Other data cited in this correspondence, which was prepared by Shelter Tasmania, shows that a majority of properties listed as short-stay accommodation in the Hobart City Council municipality had previously been listed as

long-term rentals. The report by Shelter also found that Hobart short-stay accommodation as a proportion of its total private long-term rental market is much higher than in other Australian capital cities. Because of a failure to regulate, a failure to apply a sophisticated policy response to an obvious problem, to act in the public interest, instead of in the interests of interstate and overseas investors, because it is not mum and dad Tasmanians we are really talking about here, we now have the highest concentration of short-stay properties of any capital cities in the country: Greater Sydney, the Airbnb density is 0.83 per cent, and Greater Melbourne is 1.25 per cent. Even in the middle of Melbourne it is 3.82 per cent air density.

In the Hobart City local government area, it is 9.33 per cent. That is nearly one in 10. Is that right? Of the available housing stock within the Hobart City local government area an estimated one in 10 are short-stay. We have one right next to us.

Dr Woodruff - Not you personally.

Ms O'CONNOR - No, I am not a predator landlord or an investor who owns a short-stay property. There has been an explosion in short-stay properties. Let us look at what some other jurisdictions have done. These are places that have been dealing with the issue for longer than us at a greater intensity because of the level of visitation to those cities. All of us who have travelled have stayed in Airbnb properties and it has been wonderful. We know that they play an important role, but you cannot have an unregulated system like we have now.

In May 2018 Barcelona, Spain, continued its tough stance on short-stay sites. It instructed Airbnb to remove 2577 listings that it found to be operating without an approved licence or face substantial fines. On 1 June Airbnb initiated an agreement giving Barcelona officials access to listings data. In Barcelona they continue to prioritise homes for the people who live in Barcelona over tourists. In Berlin, German officials placed some blame on Airbnb for Berlin's increasing rents and housing shortages, passing a law in 2014 banning short-term rentals that have not received explicit permission from the Berlin senate. There was a ruling by the city's council which meant that owner-occupiers can rent out their primary homes without time restrictions after obtaining a permit from city officials for up to 90 days a year. Again, there is some restraint in the system there.

In February 2015, the beautiful city of Amsterdam announced a cooperative effort with Airbnb in which the city would levy a tourist tax on rentals while Airbnb informed potential hosts of all rules and regulations. In 2018 Amsterdam limited short-term rentals to 30 days a year, halving its previous permit.

There is another issue here which we are not trying to deal with but it relates to council's capacity to levy different layers of rates on investors who are profiting from short-stay property because they are effectively running a business. At the moment, as we understand it, there is a limited capacity for councils to recognise that a short-stay property within their municipality is a profit-making business and levy a different rate on that property than they would on a Tasmanian household whose home is next door.

It is something that the Government could act on, but there is a refusal because I think it sits mostly with Mr Ferguson. New York has passed laws making it illegal to rent in New York for less than 30 days without the host present. Airbnbs in New York are home shares, apartment shares or room shares. San Francisco adopted a similar policy to New York. Airbnb rentals are allowed only if hosts are full-time residents. Rentals are capped at 90 days and all

hosts must register with the city. Santa Monica, California, effectively wiped out 80 per cent of its Airbnb listings by instituting the toughest regulations on short-term rentals in the United States. The authorities in Santa Monica said they had to make these changes because there were increases in housing prices and dwindling housing supply.

There are plenty of examples of a whole range of policy responses to get some kind of capacity to control the mix of housing in a city and its uses. Here, five years after minister Jaensch then said we need the data, there has been no action. We asked the Premier a question this morning and we got the usual 'blah blah'.

We think this is sensible policy. We know that it would place significant pressure on minister Ferguson to do what he should have done some time ago and make it easier for councils to exercise discretion. This is good policy; we know it is. It has the support of community sector organisations. It would ease some pressure on the private rental market. Ultimately, this is a vote we are about to have that is a real-world vote with real-world consequences. If we vote the right way today, it will bring an out-of-control short stay accommodation market back to something of a level that we see in other capital cities.

As I said earlier, it is out of control here. The concentration is higher here than any other capital city we have got the least affordable rents, lowest vacancy rates and a government that continues to sit on its hands and say, 'No, no we will increase supply everything will be fine. Look over there, look over there' with Monopoly money and a promise to build 10 000 homes by 2032 when they would rather apparently put a roof over Gil McLachlan's head over at Macquarie Point than they would over Tasmanian families, low income earners and people who are battling.

We warmly commend this motion to the House and we implore members to vote for this motion so at least councils would have some discretion and some capacity to rein in short-stay accommodation, which right now is out of control. We have a system that favours investors over every day Tasmanians who have been priced out of their own paradise.

[5.27 p.m.]

Ms DOW (Braddon - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I am speaking primarily from a planning point of view. I cannot understand why the Planning minister is not here. I hope he does come in and make a contribution on this bill because it is specific to planning.

There are two pretty clear examples where this Government has made large promises, big announcements, and delivered very little in Planning and Housing. What was it they said, Mr Deputy Speaker? You were not here during those times. I was not here either but I was in local government at the time: cheaper, faster, simpler, fairer. Back in 2015, eight years ago, Peter Gutwein was the minister for planning and local government at that time. He spoke about this faster, fairer, simpler and cheaper planning scheme that the Liberals were going to introduce. We are now in 2023 and we still do not have a statewide planning scheme. This Government has dragged its heels on planning.

They have not done strategic planning work across the state and you are seeing the consequences of that now when it comes to land supply and the availability of land across Tasmania for residential development. I can remember when short-stay accommodation entered Tasmania - Airbnb at the time. I was the mayor of Burnie. I can remember it was

Rene Hidding who introduced it originally, but I could be wrong. I stand corrected if I am. I can remember quite clearly at that time discussing with our planning staff at council about how there was a need for some type of regulation around Airbnb and that it really was going to be very difficult for councils to manage. The responsibility would lie primarily with councils yet they would have limited power in how it was rolled out across their community and the implications of that.

Ms O'Connor has talked a lot about housing and the housing crisis particularly here in Hobart. I know that in regional Tasmania it is a significant issue as well. I want to say from the outset that we want to work with local government, the short-stay accommodation industry and the Tasmanian community to address the housing crisis. We are willing to do that.

We think there is a need for short-term tangible measures that can be put in place right now to ease housing stress across Tasmania. The current housing crisis across Tasmania is an indictment on this Government and it is an indictment on the previous federal Liberal government as well. They have done nothing and it is shameful. No matter where you look across housing, nothing has happened, whether it be rental affordability, access to rental properties, whether it be getting into your own home - the great Tasmanian dream of owning your own home, or whether it is waiting. More than 4500 Tasmanians are on the social housing wait list and we meet them every day through our offices. I hope that my colleague, Ms Haddad, the shadow minister for housing will have an opportunity to make a contribution on this matter.

We have had a policy position on this for a while now. That policy position has been around putting a pause on the transfer of whole homes to the short-stay accommodation market. In effect, we will be supporting this motion of the Greens today. As I said, we think that it is something that is a tangible thing that could be done now to reduce housing stress and free up the availability of homes for Tasmanians.

The other point that I want to make is about what transpires between the Hobart City Council and this Government. The fact that the previous Planning minister did not provide the right advice to council in the first instance about what it could do when it came to Planning Directive No. 6. The information that the Government provided was incorrect. How did that instil confidence in the Tasmanian community in local government that this Government actually knows what it is doing when it comes to the planning scheme? Clearly, they do not. As I said, it is surprising that Mr Ferguson is not here today to be part of this debate as the Planning minister.

Ms O'Connor - It is really weird because this is about Planning Directive No 6.

Ms DOW - It is specific to Planning, that is exactly right. After nearly a decade in government the Liberals have had sufficient time to sort out the planning system across Tasmania yet we still do not have a statewide planning system. It is ordinary Tasmanians who are paying the price for the inaction of this Government when it comes to planning reform, the housing crisis and the lack of action by the Government. More than 15 000 blocks across Tasmania are vacant. Again, that comes down to land use and the availability of land for residential development.

I think that a party that prides itself on understanding the economy would understand the principles around supply and demand. Clearly, we do not have enough houses being built to

meet the demand. It is pretty simple. You need to build more houses. You need to release more land. You need to make it easier for people to construct homes and to get building permits and that involves the Planning Scheme. You need to adequately resource councils to make sure that they have the resources required to do that work.

Developers, councils and communities are all being left frustrated by the failings of 10 years of Liberal planning ministers. Not much has been achieved. Instead of wanting to work closely with local government with communities, all the responsible minister - who is not here today to make a contribution on this important debate - can do is pick fights with councils and blame them when, in the first instance, this Government, in the case of the Hobart City Council, gave them the wrong advice.

If after nearly 10 years, the Liberals have not sorted out the planning system across Tasmania, I think Tasmanians can give up hope that they ever will.

[5.35 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Minister for State Development, Construction and Housing) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased to speak on this motion to indicate the Government will not be supporting this motion for a whole range of reasons.

Let me respond to the puerile criticisms from the Deputy Leader for the Opposition saying that the Government has done nothing when it comes to housing and planning reforms. That is the most incredibly silly, ridiculous, preposterous statement of the day, maybe the week.

Ms O'Connor - Pretty rich coming from you.

Mr BARNETT - We have delivered the biggest reform in housing history since 1935, notwithstanding it was opposed by Labor.

Ms O'Connor - You brought in a piece of legislation. That is not a reform.

Mr BARNETT - Delivering the biggest investment in housing history as well.

Ms O'Connor - You have not made it, that investment.

Mr BARNETT - I do not accept those silly remarks with respect to our agenda. It is offensive, certainly as Housing minister, absolutely offensive. You should have them withdrawn. Likewise, with respect to planning reform, the minister for Planning has undertaken and is undertaking reforms and I will speak to those. I will also speak to some of the stats with respect to Hobart and some of the stats with respect to Launceston. I have some figures that I am happy to share, but, just to put it on the record, yes, we are delivering on our agenda for 10 000 homes by 2032, and there will be 1500 by 30 June this year.

We are delivering on our MyHome Shared Equity Program. We are delivering on the \$30 million into residential land release rebate. First home owners grant; the Ancillary Dwelling Incentive Program, reducing land tax, putting downward pressure on rent prices, stamp duty concessions, and private rental incentive schemes. I was with Simon Wood, the member for Bass today. We launched and announced the Affordable Rental Incentive Scheme - which was criticised by the Greens in parliament today - providing more options to address affordable housing needs.

Ms O'Connor - A dozen people were eligible last year. A dozen.

Mr BARNETT - For every single person benefited, surely you would want to welcome that, but no, the Greens simply criticise it because we are dealing with the private sector.

Ms O'Connor - Surely, I would not want to hear the Housing minister boast about helping a dozen families.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - We are dealing with the private sector and that is the reason you are opposing it and that likewise, is offensive.

We have outlined that: the \$38 million in wraparound services for homelessness and vulnerable Tasmanians. In terms of the motion, let us make it clear that this motion is not necessary. It is already in place in terms of what can be done by local councils.

Ms O'Connor - That is not true. Talk to some councillors.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - Under the standard planning rules there are already discretions that can apply when a council is considering an application for a whole home to change its use to short-stay accommodation. Several councils, including Hobart, have on occasion used these discretions to refuse short-stay applications. The planning provisions, the standard rules that apply equally to the 21 councils that are not on the Tasmanian planning scheme, and, I am certainly aware that some of them are out there who would like to see the rules in relation to short-stay tightened, more restrictive. If any councillor thinks that placing further limits on short-stay accommodation is desirable for their community they have that discretion to seek to apply local restrictions.

Ms O'Connor - What if they are under an interim planning scheme?

Mr BARNETT - Let us talk about Hobart City Council. It is the only council that I am advised that has sought to apply a more restrictive approach to short-stay, and I understand that the commission determined not to progress its consideration of that proposal based on a complex legal interpretation in relation to clauses that were introduced by Labor in 2012 to manage the transition to the interim planning mechanism.

Ms White - So, you could not possibly fix that now?

Mr BARNETT - To manage the transition to the -

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - If Hobart had their local planning scheme in place they would not have had the problem they did have. Nevertheless short-stay accommodation is just one of the many factors in the broader housing and long-term rental markets. I have said many times, as has the minister for Planning, the Premier and many others on this side of the House, supply, supply, supply. The Government has acted on this. Skylands, Droughty Point, if approved, would

deliver another 2700 new homes for Tasmanians. At the UTAS Sandy Bay campus there are another potential 2700 homes. That is a lot of new dwellings with just two proposals.

The CBOS website has been referred to in this Chamber before on a number of occasions. Its most recent short-stay report says there are only 2968 non-primary residences listed for short-stay accommodation across the entire state and only 462 of these are in Hobart.

So perhaps short-stay is not as big an issue as some would have us believe. Let us look at Hobart. The advice I have is that from November 2018 to June 2022 the council refused 16 residential development applications consisting of 28 dwellings. More significantly, in the same time frame I am advised that it refused seven mixed-used developments consisting of 250 dwellings. That does not include the over 300 applications that were withdrawn by proponents for a variety of reasons, including being advised they were likely to be refused by the council.

What is happening in Launceston? A 17 March 2023 letter from the City of Launceston on a short-stay rental report considered by the council:

Overall the short-stay accommodation market of 516 properties constitutes under two per cent of the available residential market of 31 274 properties. The proportion of rental to overall private dwellings has remained at 29 per cent to 30 per cent over 11 years in spite of a nine per cent increase in private dwellings from 2016 to 2021. Short-stay accommodation has not grown much faster than either private dwellings or rental dwellings.

Accordingly as formalised whole house or apartment short-stay accommodation accounts for less than one per cent of dwellings and around 3.1 per cent of all rented dwellings. It is not considered that short-stay accommodation is a major driver of the housing stress which is being experienced within the City of Launceston.

I am quoting from the City of Launceston from March this year when they did a report on it. I am drawing that to the Chamber's attention. I hope it is taken into account when you consider this motion and vote on it. That is the view of the Launceston City Council.

The former minister, Mr Jaensch, summarised it very well because it is different in different parts of the state. If certain councils want to act on it they can. It is up to them. The Hobart City Council can make that decision.

You asked in the contributions about the planning reforms. There have been planning reforms and the review of the planning provisions is ongoing. As required under the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act in mid-2022, the Government commenced a review of the State Planning Provisions, the standard planning rules of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme. They were made in 2017 and this has allowed the State Planning Provisions to be tested in a practical setting and provide valuable on-ground context for the review. There was that review and it is ongoing.

The first stage of the review was concluded in late 2022. It involved seeking the views of the broad community and particularly local planning authorities. While the review will ultimately consider the whole suite of State Planning Provisions, the Government wanted to identify key issues and direct the focus to those provisions that need to be further considered as a priority. That review is ongoing and there is further work to be undertaken. There are

160-odd submissions. The State Planning Office is continuing the review and the State Planning Office is also commencing a collaborative project with Homes Tasmania, which is my authority on behalf of the Government and the people of Tasmania, to review all the use and development standards in relation to the provision of housing.

We will not be supporting this motion for very good reasons. The flexibility and the discretions are already there. We will not be interfering in that regard. That is a discretion that they can use. As Mr Jaensch said earlier, it is different in different parts of the state. Why would you want to impose those changes as envisaged by the Greens? It would appear to be supported by the Labor Opposition.

I conclude by saying on my behalf and on behalf of the Government I reject the offensive remarks and criticisms by the Leader of the Greens regarding the minister for Planning and any potential conflict of interest. That is not appreciated in this place and I think it is very unfair -

Ms O'Connor - It is an observation of fact.

Mr BARNETT - It is an observation of fact from your point of view.

Dr Woodruff - You do not disagree with the fact that he is hiding under his desk.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mr BARNETT - It is entirely out of place, inappropriate and offensive. We will not be supporting the motion.

[5.48 p.m.]

Ms HADDAD (Clark) - Mr Speaker, I will make a brief contribution because I know that there will be others who will want to speak. I have spoken a lot about housing numbers and the wait list, so I will not go back over that ground. I am surprised that the Government is not supporting this. I know it is convention that governments do not support motions from opposition parties but this is a very non-political motion. It is very straightforward. It does not have any attempts to wedge any party in it. It is something that I believe the Government should have done when the Planning Commission handed down its decision around Hobart City Council's attempt to limit short-stay accommodation permits.

Hobart City Council tried to do what the Government and the former Housing minister told them that they could do. They said that local government areas were empowered to make their own decisions bespoke to their communities around short-stay accommodation permits. Hobart City Council tried to follow that advice and do exactly that and it was knocked off in the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission said Planning Directive 6 prevents local governments from making those decisions. The minister says there are discretions that apply in particular ways. They are very hard to use. They are not an overarching ability for local government to make their own decisions in the way that the Government told them that they could.

The fact is that the Government should have responded to the Planning Commission's ruling and fixed this themselves. Amend Planning Directive 6.

Ms O'Connor - They just dismissed it.

Ms HADDAD - They did dismiss it. It is because the Government made a choice. It made a choice when it came to government, when the short-stay accommodation sector started up here. The Government chose deregulation. That was the word it used. It chose deregulation. They said, 'Let the market provide, let the market answer, let the market do what it will do and we will see what happens'. Well, we are seeing what happens, we have seen what happens. You really have your head in the sand if you think that the short-stay accommodation sector is not having an impact on rentals in Tasmania. It is, and there is oodles of data to back that up that I will not read into the *Hansard* because I want to hear others' contributions, but I will say this: we know it is having an impact, but there is a role for the short-stay accommodation market.

Tasmanian Labor's position is that we would regulate. We would provide statewide regulation in collaboration with local government, and with the short stay accommodation market. We are not in the market to squash the short-stay accommodation sector. We know it has a role, but it is having an impact on private rents in Tasmania, it absolutely is. Labor would provide statewide regulations, starting with a pause on any new permits. Just take a break. Let us see what is happening, and let us act in a way that is responsible that allows the market to continue, but in a way that is fair and equitable for Tasmanian renters as well.

I am surprised that the Government has chosen to take a political approach on this motion because procedurally, they could have chosen to act on this themselves when the Planning Commission made their ruling.

[5.51 p.m]

Mrs ALEXANDER (Bass) - Mr Speaker, this, for me, is also a topic of significant importance because it is something that I have been discussing a lot in my previous life, before joining politics. It has puzzled me as to how Airbnb and the regulation of the short-stay accommodation function in Tasmania? Then I looked at other jurisdictions and I tried to understand what other places do in Australia. I would compare it with the regulations we have around retirement villages, where we do not have an overarching legislation. It is left up to the states to control that. I think that the domain of Airbnb has evolved with a disparity between states in the capacity they have to do something about it.

When looking at why is it that we have these disparities, one thought that occurred to me was what we do when we have investors from interstate who come to Tasmania and buy property. How could that be looked at? What can happen? In doing my research, I was referred to section 117 of the Australian Constitution, Rights of residents in States. It says:

A subject of the Queen, resident in any State, shall not be subject in any other State to any disability or discrimination which would not be equally applicable to him if he were a subject of the Queen resident in such other State.

That was translated to me as saying you cannot charge different rates on those properties that belong onto a resident from interstate who may have a property in Tasmania and it is reciprocal around the states.

Then I looked at what Victoria does. Victoria in the past has had some good legislation. Courts in Victoria have ruled that any strata by-law, which restricts the use of apartments for

short-term holiday letting is invalid. This is because strata law in Australia prohibits any restrictions on an owner's right to rent out their strata apartment.

Although body corporates cannot bar Airbnb lettings, they can control noise and damage to the common areas. Governments in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales are considering ways to bolster the powers of body corporates to regulate party houses, excess noise and damage to common property. What it tells me is that the issue is bigger and broader across Australia when you look at what is happening in, let's say, Victoria. Queensland and New South Wales are considering bolstering legislation but not dealing with this Airbnb situation in a way that would give some control.

I also looked at March 2022 when Hobart Deputy Lord Mayor, Helen Burnett, flagged setting differentiated rates for landlords renting their properties out as short-stay accommodation and basically saying the property owners would pay higher council rates for rentals used for short-stay accommodation. The acting mayor, Danny Gibson, at that time in Launceston also said at a recent local LGAT general meeting that the city of Launceston supported a motion from Break O'Day Council which proposed that LGAT investigate mechanisms to enable councils to differentiate vacation.

No firm proposal was put forward by councils. However, this concept was backed by advocacy groups. At that time TasCOSS CEO Adrienne Picone said that addressing the housing crisis requires pulling every level available and understanding what impact short-stay accommodation market has on rental properties across Tasmania.

I am confused because I do not know how much intervention can be done from a state perspective when a lot of it rests with a council. It appears that some councils are not coming from a similar perspective as Hobart City Council. To be honest, I do not understand what the stumbling block was in relation to the Hobart City Council and what happened for them to have a different outcome from what they were attempting to do. For me, it is quite puzzling to be amending something that potentially could have impact on other councils that may not necessarily have raised the same issues that Hobart City Council has.

Ms O'Connor - Break O'Day council has raised issues because there are so many Airbnbs.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Mrs ALEXANDER - There is another issue I would like to touch on. That makes me think that before we go into full-on amending something, maybe a fuller consultation with the councils should occur and give councils the opportunity to put forward a clear position on what they can recommend to the state Government, what they should be doing in relation to Airbnb and where those changes should occur in the Tasmanian Planning Commission. Ultimately they will be responsible for applying the law and the rules. They will be the ones responsible for that. I think they do have to have a serious input in this.

I understand what the motion is that the Leader of the Greens is doing here. I totally appreciate where the good spirit is coming from.

Ms O'Connor - It is also supported by the state's peak housing lobby.

Mr SPEAKER - Order.

Ms O'Connor - Mr Speaker, Mrs Alexander was having a conversation with me.

Mr SPEAKER - I am saying that I am upholding the Standing Orders to say that interjections should cease. There is no such thing as a conversation across the Chamber. One member should be speaking and the rest should be listening.

Mrs ALEXANDER - My apologies, Mr Speaker. I might have been drawing the Leader of the Greens into a conversation so it is probably my fault.

I have always been a bit more of a consultative person and I would like to see a little more consultation with the local councils to ensure whatever the state Government ends up doing and whatever amendments it ends up doing and supporting, they actually have the full support of councils. There is capacity for them to control process and have a little more control over that.

In the motion we refer to 'whole properties' but when you go to the Airbnb definition - and this is where it can be a bit of a catch all - the Airbnb definition of whole property -

Time expired.

Mr SPEAKER - The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided -

AYES 12

Dr Broad
Ms Butler
Ms Dow
Ms Finlay
Ms Haddad (Teller)
Ms Johnston
Mr O'Byrne
Ms O'Byrne
Ms O'Connor
Ms White
Mr Winter
Dr Woodruff

NOES 12

Mrs Alexander
Ms Archer
Mr Barnett
Mr Ellis
Mr Ferguson
Mr Jaensch
Ms Ogilvie
Mr Rockliff
Mr Street
Mr Tucker
Mr Wood (Teller)
Mr Young

Mr SPEAKER - The result of the division being 12 Ayes and 12 Noes, in accordance with Standing Order 167 I cast my vote with the Noes.

Motion negatived.

ADJOURNMENT

The Beaconsfield Fire Brigade - 70th Anniversary

Palliative Care Week

[6.05 p.m.]

Ms O'BYRNE (Bass) - Mr Speaker, I want to talk about an event that was held in the electorate of Bass. I want to recognise that my colleague Ms Finlay was there, Mrs Alexander was there and minister Ferguson was there. It was to celebrate a significant birthday: the 70th anniversary of the Beaconsfield fire brigade.

It was a fantastic community event with lots of events for children, lots of opportunities for recruitment, and a fantastic cake. Most importantly, there was a phenomenally good speech given by the brigade chief Todd Russell. I was so impressed with it that I asked Todd for permission to read that speech into the House. It talked about the history of the brigade, the importance to the community, and that value of that collective role of volunteering and community. As Todd Russell said:

We are here today to celebrate a significant milestone in the history of Beaconsfield. We celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Beaconsfield fire brigade, and I am honoured to be able to stand here today as the 7th brigade chief having the honour to lead and support along with my other officers, a dedicated and family orientated group of volunteers.

The Beaconsfield fire brigade was first founded in 1953 after a discussion was initiated between the dedicated group of men and the local council in 1948. The first proposals were put together and presented to the Launceston fire brigade board and then finally in 1953 the brigade was founded, which led to the establishment and building of our first fire station to support an old established mining township of just over 1000 residents and around 300 dwellings.

My grandfather, Jack Russell, who in total had 48 years with the Tasmanian Fire Service, firstly with the Launceston fire brigade before moving to Beauty Point along with his family, my dad, his brother and two sisters when my grandfather became a local barber and the first brigade chief of the Beaconsfield fire brigade where he was a brigade chief for nearly 17 years.

1955 saw the brigade receive its first fire truck, a 1934 Ford V8 fire engine. Before receiving this fire engine, a group of locals who became members of the fire brigade would turn out and fight fires with buckets of water. They became known locally as the bucket brigade, and even with poor water supply for firefighting, the brigade managed to save many properties from the ravages of fire. Sadly though, they lost a lot of properties too, because of the inadequate water and lack of equipment at the time.

1970 saw my grandfather, the late Jack Russell, retire from the Tasmania Fire Service where he finished with 48 years of service in total with the Tasmania Fire Service.

This led the way for another local gentleman by the name of Barry Seen to be elected as my grandfather's successor. Barry Seen was a dedicated member where he served with distinction for 20 years as brigade chief from 1970. During that time the brigade saw new training skills introduced as well as updated equipment and the introduction of our junior program which is still running strong today.

In the 70-year history of this great brigade there have been seven brigade chiefs in total. Jack Russell from 1953 to 1970; Barry Seen from 1970 to 1990; Mike Wooley from 1990 to 2000; Terry Kealy from 2000 to 2003; Greg Miller from 2003 to 2008; Timmy Williams from 2008 to 2011 and Todd Russell from 2011 to currently.

Over the years the brigade has come forward in leaps and bounds from our first fire station which was in West Street to the new station that we have here now that was opened in 1985.

Over the years we have seen our fleet and appliances develop from buckets to basic trucks with a water tank and a pump, to what we could see today. State-of-the-art appliances incorporating the latest firefighting and safety technology are available. This equipment and the technology behind is what allows us to cope with any emergency as it arises from bushfires, structure fires, DVA alarms and accidents, even down to the simple community services. Over these years, the brigade has attended thousands of these incidents. They have been significant events within our community: two major incidents, Kerrison's Hardware that burned down in 1983, and the Beauty Point Hotel fire in August 1987.

Over the years we have seen a lot of members come and go, with some achieving significant milestones and leaving an indelible impression on the brigade. A few of them are the late Jack Russell, with 48 years' service; the late Barry Seen 34 years' service; the late Desmond Webber, 33 years' service, 22 as second officer; Jackie Wilson, 30 years' service; Noah Russell, 42 years' service; and the list goes on.

We do not do this job because of the red and blue lights. It is about community spirit and service.

Me and the members that form the brigade come together to train and grow our skills so that we can support and protect our community as needed.

I thank every single member of this brigade that I stand in front of today as brigade chief. It makes me proud that I am able to lead such a committed bunch of people. I feel honoured and privileged to be able to continue a strong family tradition of supporting the local Beaconsfield community through the Beaconsfield Fire Brigade.

Before I sit down, I note that it is Palliative Care Week. Members would know that I have had an engagement with a palliative care team late last year during a significant event

for my best friend. I know that when we campaigned very heavily for the right to die, one of the concerns was that palliative care would somehow be diminished during that role.

I want to say that I cannot speak highly enough of the work that the palliative care team provided, their incredible support for the family, making what was one of the most difficult times of their life as peaceful and calm as it could be. Both options were available to my friend. That was the one that worked best for her. That is how the legislation should work and that is how our structure should work. I cannot speak highly enough of the kindness and skill of that palliative care team. I want to put that on the record on this very important week.

UTAS - Proposed Move

[6.11 p.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Clark - Leader of the Greens) - Mr Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about the proposed UTAS move into the city and about democracy, also, to thank architects, Ian Johnson and Peter Bicevskis.

Peter Bicevskis has more than 40 years' experience in large-scale urban architecture and planning. We went for a walk about a month ago, an architect-led tour of the proposed UTAS city move sites. We went to the Melville Street, the former Forestry Tasmania building which is a fantastic site. We talked through some of the challenges there and I learnt then, which I had not known, that overwhelmingly lecturers and staff were concerned about the move into that building and what that may mean for their learning experience.

We then went to the K&D site which is one of the great sites in Hobart and talked about the plans for that site and some of the issues with that. Then we did an interesting tour of the UTAS accommodation. There are two major accommodation buildings in the city for UTAS and one of them was as a result of the Labor-Greens government securing National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) funding when I was Housing minister, to build the first one in Elizabeth Street and then there is the Melville Street accommodation. There are some issues there with that accommodation. It just looks a bit cheap. There was supposed to be a community garden out the back and there are some very sad, depressed-looking scrappy trees out the back and some flowers in planter boxes. It was not particularly impressive.

The reason I am on my feet today is because there has been quiet from UTAS about the proposed move for a while now, in fact ever since the Hobart elector poll which found that 75 per cent of the residents of Hobart did not support the move. There might be a whole range of reasons for that. It might be a bit like the stadium where basically the population was told, 'here, you will have this. This is the way it will be'. Whatever the reason for so much local community angst about it, it is a fact that almost 23 000 voters voted 'no' in the UTAS elector poll. That is a real challenge for the university's management because this city belongs to the people of greater Hobart, the people of Tasmania. When you have such resistance in the population to a move, surely it is a moment for self-reflection.

Then there was the survey by the National Tertiary Education Union where it found 75 per cent of UTAS staff and the Tasmanian University Student Association opposed the move. About six weeks ago on 3 April, I released a statement which said:

The TUSA state council is of the position that there should be no changes to the physical locations of university campuses in the south of Australia unless the following occurs:

That UTAS shows a genuine and concerted effort to improve communication, engagement and transparency with students.

UTAS can show that a change in location would not adversely impact educational quality or the student experience, and the university commits to making university facilities and learning environments accessible and affordable to all students.

I want to preface all my comments today by saying that I love the University of Tasmania. It is our only university. It has been there for our aspirational people of all ages, our best and brightest. It has educated my children so they can go on to greater things.

There has been an issue lately where there seems to have been more of a focus on being a property developer than delivering the highly academic educational standards that UTAS has long had a reputation for. I have spoken to students who have made a choice to further their studies on the mainland because, for example, they do not want to be watching four -year-old videos of law professors.

Some of the fabric of that campus life has been profoundly altered. I am sure it is not just at the University of Tasmania. The world is changing, and people should be able to access tertiary education online, but there has been a perception at least, among people who would seek to do their degrees, postgraduate at UTAS, that the focus on development in the city has come at the expense of an emphasis on academic education quality, rightly or wrongly.

We asked some questions of the Premier last year about the UTAS move and he pretended that UTAS is a private entity despite the fact it is administered under the University of Tasmania Act of 1992, it receives around \$30 million in state funds annually, and it is our only University.

UTAS has some issues here with the democratic expression of the people of Hobart, of staff and of students, where there is deep resistance to the move. There is a concern about diminishing quality of learning at UTAS. It would be wonderful if they just press pause and had a deeper conversation with those affected communities, to see if there is another path forward, a third way. I think what is going to happen here is that, as is so often the way in Tasmania, a developer will try to carry on regardless. Given this is a public institution, much loved by Tasmanians, needed by Tasmanians, that they have a responsibility to apply a deft and responsive touch here to this issue, because it has caused concern in the community. People are not happy with the way it has been handled by university management. I say those things in good faith.

The Men's Table

[6.18 p.m.]

Mr WOOD (Bass) - Mr Speaker, earlier this year, I had the pleasure of meeting Ben Hughes, one of the co-founders and a driving force behind the Australian not-for-profit charity,

The Men's Table. The Men's Table is a grassroots activity driven by local community members across the country to create a sense of belonging, community, camaraderie and peer support among its participants. It is there to contribute to mental, emotional and social wellbeing.

The Men's Table was founded in 2011 when a group of men in Sydney decided to get together and have a dinner with the intention of creating a place to connect and talk about the highs and lows of their lives. It has been meeting on a monthly basis ever since, so that members can talk, laugh and share what is going on for them, and forge meaningful relationships based on trust and acceptance. Its success has been very high since that time.

Men's Table groups have been forming across the country, facilitating gatherings where men can connect, socialise and foster, as indeed their mantra states: Healthy men, healthy masculinities and healthy communities.

The benefits of being part of the table are many. For instance, more than 75 per cent of Australian suicides sadly are male. This figure is even higher in Tasmania. Suicide is the number one killer of men under the age of 55. Sadly many of us can number at least one male friend or family member who has committed suicide. The Australian Men's Health Forum states that male suicide causes differ from female suicide causes in several important ways, particularly reactivity. For example Tasmanian suicide statistics for men show that 77 per cent of suicides are linked to social or physical isolation, 77 per cent of suicides are linked to relationship separation, 77 per cent of suicides are linked to financial issues, 81 per cent of suicides linked to substance misuse, 82 per cent are work-related suicides and 85 per cent of suicides are linked to legal issues.

In contrast, suicide in Tasmanian women is 20 per cent more likely to be linked to mood disorders such as depression, and 60 per cent more likely to be linked to disorders such as anxiety than male suicide.

It has been shown that Men's Tables act as suicide prevention initiatives by providing connection that reduces isolation and support and talks over issues such as relationship separation, financial issues, substance misuse and legal problems.

Belonging to a Men's Table's contributes to mental, emotional and social wellbeing while being a powerful support to individual members travelling their life's journeys. The overwhelming majority of participants report that their table is a safe place to share and be heard, that they find connection in friendship and that attendance has a positive impact on their relationships with other men.

There is no membership fee. Men are listened to and accepted, questions are usually not asked, and fixing of others along with prophesying and generalisation is generally discouraged. Regular entree events are held where men can come along for the initial visit to see what it is like and ask questions. Tables are supported by a central office appropriately called the kitchen.

Men's Tables create ripple effects that spread into communities. A recent Men's Table survey of women connected to men at tables show that 38 per cent reported an improvement in family harmony since the table was joined.

Men's Tables create community building initiatives as well. They hold community events online and in-person, where men from across tables come together to share, learn and

connect. While men's primary experience will be at their own table, belonging to this growing community helps them be part of something bigger, the bigger picture, and the positive changes taking place towards healthy men, healthy masculinities and healthy communities.

Since July 2021, 10 Tasmanian tables have started across the state, in Launceston, Hobart and Burnie. The Men's Table started small in the state and has grown table by table as it has been able. They were this year's recipient of the Launceston Chamber of Commerce Spirit Super awards for exceptional community building and the Chamber Award voted on by members of the chamber.

The Chamber Award is open to the first 20 entrants and is awarded to the organisation that best contributes to the northern Tasmanian business community. The winning of these awards was achieved with only one full-time employee, Ben Hughes, who you could imagine is a very hard working and highly motivated individual. Knowing what this group is doing to bolster opportunities for men to support male mental health and make social connections that make positive rippled community effects, I was really proud to recently support its Tasmanian funding submission to the Rockliff Liberal Government's \$2 million Healthy Focus Grants program.

I am very pleased to report that this submission was successful and now, thanks to the grant of \$100 000 for future activities and growth of The Men's Table, it can continue its great work in establishing healthy, enduring communities of men in more locations across Tasmania.

Mr Speaker, The Men's Table Community is for men from all tables in life, from all regions, beliefs and backgrounds and, by extension, their families and communities. Thanks to this funding, the chapter can continue to flourish and grow.

Petition - Maintaining Special Schools in Devonport and Burnie

[6.25 p.m.]

Dr BROAD (Braddon) - Mr Speaker, I seek leave of the House to table a document which is a petition that has been prepared but unfortunately does not conform with the Standing Orders.

I have spoken about this with the Leader of Government Business in the House and also the Leader of the Greens. The petition is a change.org petition and it is called 'Honour Election Commitment - Keep Special Schools Local in Devonport and Burnie'.

I have talked about this petition on adjournment before. It has been signed at the moment by 1026 people and they are hoping to get up to 1500 signatures but maybe more. This petition goes on to say:

Save Our Special Education Schools.

The Government is proposing to close down north-west support school campuses in Devonport which is 67 students and Burnie, 71 students, to open a larger amalgamated school campus in Penguin. Bigger is not better for our disabled kids. We need to retain our schools locally in Devonport and Burnie.

In addition to the burden of extra travel, some medically compromised students are unable to regularly travel increased distances. There will be serious consequences like higher time for first responders to reach Penguin during a medical emergency, the to and fro travel from Penguin to Middy Therapies in Devonport/Burnie and the reduced resting time for our children.

Penguin does not have economical housing options for low incomes - buying or renting - which is further compounded by the current housing crisis. Our children deserve to be treated like any other with fair access to local schools, Mr Speaker.

Leave granted.

This is quite an important petition and I have spoken about this in the past. I have spoken with families from the Devonport and Burnie areas. I know my colleague, Ms Anita Dow, my fellow member for Braddon, has also spoken with families from Burnie and they are very concerned. They have raised this issue.

When this was first announced without any notification, the parents described the conversation that went along the lines of, 'What colour would you like the carpet', rather than asking what they thought about it. The Government might have moved their position a little to heading towards more general consultation - so real consultation - but time will tell.

This change.org petition has gained a number of signatures - 1000 - so when you think about the number of families directly involved, this petition far outstretches that. I will read some of the comments. This petition is still live so if people want to go onto change.org and search 'Honour Election Commitment' you can find the petition if you feel like signing up. I will read some of the comments from people who have signed the petition:

We need to support our most disadvantaged in the best way we can and I believe this is with smaller-sized more regional schools.

Another person says:

These children and their families don't need this sort of interruption to their days. We should make going to school as easy as we can for all students and parents.

Another one says:

The most vulnerable need every chance we can provide.

Another one says:

I grew up in Devonport and love this place. I couldn't imagine growing up in Devonport having special needs then one day getting told my school is closing and being relocated. Talk about making you feel like the outcast of your own city. Blood boils at reading this. I sincerely hope your petition and the many voices are heard.

Another one says:

Schools' community needs have to be addressed.

And so it goes on.

These children should not have to travel for an extended amount of time. Many families already struggle to provide for their children and closing one school will add more challenges to their lives.

And so it goes on and on.

People are very concerned about this. That is why this petition has gained well over 1000 signatures. The families are concerned. I hope that the Government is listening to their concerns. The election promise that the Government took to the last election was to upgrade the Burnie support school and to find a location to upgrade the Devonport support school. There is absolutely no doubt that Burnie needs upgrades, and there is absolutely no doubt that Devonport support school is not up to standard. The Government promised to build another support school in Devonport and they have basically thrown up their hands and said they cannot find a site. It is up to the Government to find a suitable site because these children need the extra support.

I know families have rearranged their lives - in fact, sometimes they have moved to be close to the support school. The last thing they need is to have to go to Penguin. Basically it disadvantages and creates problems for all the parents in Burnie and all the parents in Devonport, and further out, the distances from those two centres. The only people it would advantage would be the very few families who are based in Penguin.

This is a significant issue for those families. They have arranged this petition. They are very vocal. They are getting themselves organised. I really hope that the Government listens to their concerns but, more importantly, the Government needs to honour their election commitments.

RSL Tasmania - Protection of the Cenotaph

[6.32 p.m.]

Ms BUTLER (Lyons) - Mr Speaker, I rise today to continue with a discussion that we had today with the House. I would like to say from the start that Tasmania Labor have always supported RSL Tasmania in the protection of the iconic Hobart Cenotaph. We have never wavered from that. We recognise that RSL Tasmania is an apolitical representative group. We respect their bravery and their courage in taking the strong stance they have taken over the last 12 months.

RSL Tasmania does not oppose a stadium. RSL Tasmania has no opinion whatsoever on whether or not a stadium is the right priority. RSL Tasmania has stated time and time again that they are fully supportive of an AFL football team and an AFL Womens football team as well. RSL Tasmania, however, has been trying for the last 12 months to seek proper answers about the size and scope, and the time and the length of the project, because it is so close to the

existing Hobart Cenotaph. It is 40 metres from the Cenotaph green. It is 100 metres from the actual Cenotaph.

They have also now been provided with two lots of artistic impressions. The first lot of artistic impressions did not make any sense at all. They have been consulted - that is, someone has sat down and said, 'Look we really do not know anything. We will get some answers to you. We really do not know anything. It is going to be fine. We do not have the designs'. That is not consultation. That is a tick off, 'Yes, we have consulted'. That is not providing any real information.

Recently they were provided with some lovely pictures, some artistic impressions, which were also leaked to the *Mercury* at the same time that they received those artistic impressions. Those artistic impressions actually do not make any sense in measurements and relativity and so forth and so they still have no solace provided to them that that stadium is not going to impede on their Cenotaph.

John Hardy was on the ABC radio the other morning relaying what happened at the congress on the Sunday night. I attended that congress on the Sunday. In that room were some - and I do not want to generalise people as a general rule - but there was a pretty conservative bunch of people in that room representing those subbranches. They had very well thought through arguments.

This was not something that any of those subbranch representatives took lightly. All those people, I would state, of the 80 per cent who voted to continue with their stance to protect the Cenotaph, most of the people in that room would have had good relationships and good interactions at some stage with Mr Guy Barnett, the Tasmanian Minister for Veterans' Affairs, a person who has spent a lot of time, and I would like to think had a really good track record, with representing Tasmanian veterans.

He certainly has, I think, if you look at the work he has done with Teddy Sheean and at his representations. Guy Barnett, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, has done a pretty good job in representing Tasmanian veterans. Yes, there has not been enough state funding for wellbeing centres, there has not been enough of a push for ensuring that there are proper concessions and so forth but overall, on a representation basis I would say Guy Barnett has done a good job of representing Tasmanian veterans and has had a good relationship with RSL Tasmania.

I do not understand how Guy Barnett can look those veterans in the eye and say to them that he is not going to assist them with protecting their Cenotaph. The point that John Hardy made is: would the Victorian minister for veterans allow a stadium to be built that close to the Shrine of Remembrance? Would the ACT minister for veterans allow a stadium to be built so close the Unnamed Soldier Memorial in Canberra? I do not think so.

What has happened here is that the Government has really lost their way. Guy Barnett has always been passionate about his representation of Tasmanian veterans and he has been sidelined. He is not able to stand with Tasmanian veterans, to be with them to protect that Cenotaph. That Cenotaph is so important.

When you look at the site and the scope of what they are looking at, is there going to be any room at all for the Cenotaph when they are finished? These are some of the questions that need to be answered. The least they can do is understand that their own Minister for Veterans'

Affairs is listening to them and is standing by the side of the Tasmanian veterans and RSL Tasmania. I can tell you that at the moment RSL Tasmania has a better relationship with Reconciliation Tasmania.

They are the two stakeholder groups. They are two really different, normally opposing, stakeholder groups. I can tell you that they are very united at the moment because both groups have been cast aside. Both groups do not feel represented. I call on Guy Barnett to stand up to your Premier and stand by the side of Tasmanian veterans.

Time expired.

Maugean Skate Population - Macquarie Harbour

[6.38 p.m.]

Dr WOODRUFF (Franklin) - Mr Speaker, I will talk today about a report that has just been released by David Moreno, scientist, and Jayson Semmens also a scientist, from IMAS. The interim report, *Macquarie Harbour Maugean Skate Population Status and Monitoring*, telegraphs their significant concern for the survival of the ancient Maugean skate. The summary says they have detected a potential decline in the skate population and it raises their concerns for their conservation of the species. The size of female skates has significantly increased in the 10-year period from 2012-21 and the proportion of juveniles that it has captured has significantly decreased. In normal person translation speak, that means that there are fewer breeding female skates to have babies. They simply are not there; the population is ageing and not many babies are being born.

There is evidence that there has been a substantial decline in this endangered species between 2014 and 2021 by just under a half, 47 per cent. The scale of that overall decline and the scarcity of the new baby skates that are coming into the population means they have significant concern for the conservation of the species and there is need for immediate action. Their results, they say, highlight the vulnerability of the species to degraded environmental conditions.

What are those degraded environmental conditions? I am glad you asked, Mr Speaker. What we know is that the skate are walking the short plank to extinction because of there is no oxygen in the lower harbour. IMAS themselves have now confirmed that that has been caused by fish farm nutrient overload amongst other things, including climate change and heating waters.

The Government's treatment of the Maugean skate over the last eight years has been a parade of obscene disdain for threatened species protection. They know, and it has been writ large for eight years now that the biomass, the nutrients that are being dumped into Macquarie Harbour have been killing off the oxygen levels in the waters. We have seen that through the Senate inquiry that Senator Whish-Wilson for the Australian Greens got up in 2015. It was very clear that the companies at the time were fighting amongst themselves, doing their very best to increase biomass, despite the fact that all the warning levels were there from the IMAS scientists that oxygen levels had almost disappeared.

We knew in 2005 that there were only 2000 tonnes of salmon that were being farmed in Macquarie Harbour. That is what sustainability looks like but we cannot help ourselves in

Tasmania. It is not good enough if you are not doubling and doubling and doubling and so, what was a sustainable aquaculture industry that had no problems existing in Macquarie Harbour for a very long time, went on steroids under the Liberals, and the Labor Party beforehand, and it grew fourfold by 2011. By 2015 it had grown to nearly 20 000 tonnes of salmon and there were ten different fish farm leases in the harbour.

Neville Barrett, the IMAS scientist who has for so long followed the Maugean skate, predicted from the outset that the oxygen would decline straight away. That is what they found. Little oxygen in the ten metres below the harbour. Dead zones were discovered where the benthic layer was devoid of life and there was damage identified to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

By 2018, 1.35 million salmon had died as a result of the lack of oxygen when there was a heatwave and a water flushing event. That is just the evidence that is sitting there that we have in front of us. People who are listening to this would wonder why the Government has not stepped in earlier. We would wonder that too if it was not for the fact that we have Henry Batista on the front page of the *Mercury* today calling on the Government to go in harder and to get rid of the pathetically weak environmental protection because they are 'time consuming and expensive'. He thinks the remnant Tasmanian environmental protections that are not even protecting the Maugean skate from going extinct in the next heatwave, which is what the scientists from IMAS have predicted.

The next heatwave, in all likelihood will be this summer, because El Niño is being very clearly predicted by the Japanese Bureau of Meteorology, and it is likely under the Australian Bureau of Meteorology projections that we are going to have a heatwave. It is going to cause all our waters to warm and it is going to be devastating for the critically endangered Maugean skate. So why would the Government not just pull out all the salmon farms from Macquarie Harbour? What they are doing is knowingly causing that skate to go extinct. They are doing it purposefully and wilfully with full knowledge that they have had for eight years now. This latest report makes it abundantly clear that if they do not pull the salmon farms out of Macquarie Harbour, they are causing the Maugean skate to go extinct.

The sad thing is, I think they have lost their moral compass on this entirely. The Liberals do not care because they would rather have cosy corporate dinners with the Batista brothers; they would rather chat to Henry's uncle, Joseley, and to the CEO of Cooke Canada and feel important, like they are just handing it all to big business just like they do on short-stay accommodation. We have to get it out because we love the beautiful diversity of Tasmania. People are not going to stop wanting to protect the Maugean skate.

Time expired.

Maugean Skate Population - Government Action

Petition - Maintaining Special Schools in Devonport and Burnie

[6.46 p.m.]

Mr JAENSCH (Braddon - Minister for Environment and Climate Change) - Mr Speaker, I did not come here intending to make a contribution but there are a couple of points I need to make in response to at least the last one from Dr Woodruff. In truth, where Dr Woodruff

categorises the Government as wilfully, purposefully contributing to the threatening processes for this species -

Dr Woodruff - Prove me wrong.

Mr SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, order.

Mr JAENSCH - and having done nothing, I need to put a couple of things on the record.

The Tasmanian Government since 2014 has been part-funding the research that was quoted from today and has been a participant in working with IMAS and others -

Dr Woodruff - You have been monitoring their extinction. Good on you for recording it.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Dr Woodruff.

Mr JAENSCH - to understand the population and its dynamics in the harbor, to understand the harbour and how it works, and a whole range of threatening processes which are associated with this species.

It owes its threatened species status partly to the fact that as far as we currently know, it exists only in Macquarie Harbour. Previously it had been recorded in Bathurst Harbour and Port Davey but it seems no longer to be there. By the way, there is no aquaculture industry in those areas so it is likely that this species is affected by a range of factors and has a complex relationship with its environment. These harbours are very special environments -

Dr Woodruff - Bollocks. That is absolutely untrue. Read this report.

Mr SPEAKER - Order, Dr Woodruff.

Mr JAENSCH - and we need to be able to address them on all fronts.

Dr Woodruff characterised the growth of the industry but she also mentioned that it had peaked in around 2015. If she was being clear she would reflect that the total biomass production from the industry in Macquarie Harbour has been reduced in stages over time since 2015. In response to the latest reports from IMAS, the EPA has further reduced the total permitted dissolved nitrogen output from aquaculture in the harbour, in addition to a range of other measures -

Dr Woodruff - You are the most recent in a long line of non-environment ministers.

Mr SPEAKER - Dr Woodruff, order. If you want to stay here and be involved in tomorrow's discussion, I suggest that you do not interrupt the minister any more.

Mr JAENSCH - including further restrictions on recreational gillnetting in the harbour and discussions with Hydro Tasmania about further modification of inflows to the harbour to look at how we can affect its unique hydrology further. Work is also being done to investigate options for ex situ breeding programs - breeding programs that might lead to us having

Maugean skate in the smaller age ranges grown out elsewhere and reintroduced into the harbour.

We have also developed a listing statement which was published late last year and have commenced a conservation action plan for the species, which includes a range of scientific partners as well as the Australian Government. We are working on a range of threatening processes, which Dr Woodruff referred to in passing from the text in the report she quoted from today. Noting that this is a complex ecosystem, this is a species with a very, very narrow range. It is one of the few species to have been able to survive in Macquarie Harbour with its very stratified water column, its temperature profile and its habit of having large singular events, particularly from surges of sea water entering the harbour that inverts its oxygenated water profile as well that makes it a very difficult environment for a species like the skate to survive in.

We are grappling with the realities of that. We are working with industry and recreational users. We have supported the Cradle Coast Authority to work with the local community to raise awareness of the role of the skate in the ecosystem and things that they can do to assist that. I think it is very unfair and politically mischievous on such an important issue for Dr Woodruff to characterise the Government as wilfully and purposefully trying to send a species extinct. That is an obnoxious thing to do.

As the minister responsible, I would be happy to take questions from Dr Woodruff at any time on this matter. Instead she tries to characterise us as the villains in the game. Nothing could be further from the truth.

While I am on my feet, earlier Dr Broad came in and with the apparent agreement of leaders of each the parties, tabled a petition. I am aware of the petition. I welcome it and I will respond to it. Dr Broad needs to be very careful that he does not characterise the Government's intentions inaccurately. We had made commitments to the North West Support School and its parents and students and their school community to invest in their facilities at the 2021 election and we maintain our commitment to invest in that.

In the process of planning how we do that, new options have come to light. We thought it only fair to take those to the school community to seek their input on them, particularly where it provided us with an opportunity on an existing unused primary school site at Penguin, to create a larger campus with greater critical mass, better access to services like libraries, a full-time on-site nurse, access to recreational facilities and the ability to grow on site that was not available to us earlier on. We wanted to take it back and talk to the families about it and seek their input.

They have raised a number of issues through the consultation. We will give those careful consideration to see if they are things we can respond to before we can make a decision about whether to pursue this option further or to dismiss it outright in favour of returning to our original commitment.

We have not abandoned our previous commitments but we will take every opportunity if we see that there is an opportunity to deliver a better outcome for our students and the families that use those schools. I make no apology for that. We will continue to consult on those issues to see if they are something the school community supports us having a closer look at, so we can deliver a better service to their kids.

Maugean Skate Population - Comments made by Dr Woodruff

Launceston General Hospital - Issues

[6.52 p.m.]

Ms FINLAY (Bass) - Mr Speaker, like the Environment minister I had no intention of speaking about Maugean skates. What I find unbelievable is that people can come into this place, drop a bomb, leave, with no skerrick of truth in the contributions that they make.

I am talking about the contribution from the member of the Greens who closed her contribution on Maugean skates by saying it is the complete responsibility of the salmon industry and unless the salmon industry is totally removed from Macquarie Harbour, the Maugean skate would be extinct.

It is so far from the truth it is fantasy. I welcome the contribution from the Environment minister. I stood in this place yesterday and questioned the commitment of this Government to the salmon industry. It says one thing then does not follow it up with action. I am disappointed in the salmon plan but I am pleased that the Environment minister spoke passionately, articulately and well informed about the Maugean skate in Macquarie Harbour.

It is important to have that balanced contribution because it is a complex system, with many inputs. There are many reasons why the Maugean skate is in the condition and state that it is now. It is not only because of the salmon industry. The salmon industry does not have to fully withdraw from Macquarie Harbour to save Maugean skate. It is reckless for people to come into this place, drop a bomb, leave, not tell the truth and then use that to post and broadcast to their members without regard for the impact it has on the industry, and most importantly the impact it has on the workers of that industry, their families and their communities.

What I did want to speak about tonight is the Launceston General Hospital. It is a topic of intense interest to me and the people of northern Tasmania because it is a place that northern Tasmanians go to be cared for. A constituent in Bass has shared with me a horrendous story when they went to visit their mate in hospital yesterday. I am going to read into the record the message I received:

I went to visit my mate who had just had hip replacement surgery at the LGH. He had a few problems with the wound site, dressings were changed frequently, but the nurses ...

and this is my comment: the nurses, and the teams and the staff at the LGH and all across the health system are incredible. My colleague has reinforced how incredible the nursing staff and people in our hospitals are. I continue the quote:

... had to reuse the waterproof dressings.

They had to reuse dressings after a hip replacement surgery. There were not any available in the ward or in the hospital. Our Health minister has taken his eye off the needs of the Tasmanian public. If the Government cannot afford bandages, how can we afford a stadium?

I get messages like this all the time, but when I get a message about someone who has had hip replacement surgery and the hospital does not have waterproof dressings to put over

the top of it when it has to be repeatedly changed and they have had problems with their wounds, that is extraordinary. It is extremely deficit of the care that is required by this Government for the people of Tasmania.

It was not that long ago that I stood in this place and I had another friend and colleague, a constituent of the electorate of Bass, and a member of their family had been in Hobart for open heart surgery. I am not sure who remembers, but I spoke in this place about the incredible care this person was given by the staff. Prior to open heart surgery he had a shower, was washed in preparation for the surgery, but for the week following open heart surgery in Hobart, there was no clean laundry in the hospital, no clean sheets and no clean towels. My friend could not have a shower for a week following open heart surgery.

So you have no laundry in Hobart and you have no waterproof dressings in Launceston. There is something absolutely horrendously wrong with the health system in Tasmania. Theatre lights are literally being held together by sticky tape, air conditioning does not work and you have people across Tasmania promised services they cannot access because of the state of the health system in Tasmania.

Premier Jeremy Rockliff is also the Minister for Health in Tasmania. The Minister for Health must step up, must see this as a priority and as an urgent manner, and must make sure that he get his priorities right. When we have people talking about hospitals not having the basics, not having waterproof wound dressings, not having clean laundry, having theatre lights held together by sticky tape, there is a massive problem.

Things can be done to take the pressure out of our major hospitals. We know in Tasmanian Labor that if you invested in our district hospitals and our regional health facilities, that it would make a massive difference and take the pressure off our city hospitals.

Recent occupancy rates in our district hospitals: at Beaconsfield - these are the 2020-21 stats; the 2021-22 stats are not completed for a full financial year in this report - 46 per cent occupancy; at Flinders Island, 21 per cent occupancy; George Town 61 per cent occupancy; in Scottsdale 44 per cent occupancy.

There is capacity in our regional hospitals and our district centres to take more people into them in order to take the pressure off the hospitals. If we had the right focus on the right things in this Government for the people of Tasmania, we would not be seeing these circumstances that we have now. I received this text message on a day where we are talking about the priorities of Tasmania. Someone who has had hip surgery cannot have the waterproof dressing provided, and it has to be reused because they are not available in the hospital: there is something seriously wrong. This must be addressed by the Health minister.

The House adjourned at 6.58 p.m.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No. 23 of 2022 House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Hon Rebecca White MP

ANSWERED BY: Hon Nic Street MP
Minister for Hospitality and Events

QUESTION:

1. How many applications were received for the Revitalising Local Hospitality Venues Grant Program?
2. Who were the successful applicants of the Revitalising Local Hospitality Venues Grant Program?
3. How much funding did each successful application receive and what was the funding for?

ANSWER:

1. The department received 196 applications.
2. The attached list contains the 150 successful applicants.
3. Each of the 150 successful applicants received a one-off grant of \$5,000. The attached list contains the projects undertaken.

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED



Hon Nic Street MP
Minister for Hospitality and Events

Date: 18 May 2023

Successful applicants of the Revitalising Local Hospitality Venues Grant Program

	Applicant/Business Name	Project Activity Expenditure
1.	41 Degrees South Tasmania	Exterior awning installation
2.	Acef Seefen Mikhael Trading as Marquis Bistro & Buffet	Purchase audio sounds system
3.	Ayanday Pty Ltd atf Singline Family Trust trading as The Gunners Arms Tavern	Upgrade coffee machine
4.	B&J Godfrey Pty Ltd Trading as Drunken Admiral Restaurant	Purchase of foil sealer Purchase of enrobing machine Website design and revamp
5.	Baked Gluten Free	Purchase meat mincer, benchtop bandsaw, knife sets
6.	Bar Two	Plumbing and installation for new equipment New pasta cooker
7.	Beachfront32 Takeaway Pty Ltd	Purchase tabletop tablets Modify menu and development of online order system New tables and chairs Purchase dish sanitizing system Street Sign and LED display
8.	Beauty Point Waterfront Hotel Pty Ltd	Purchase new oven
9.	Belly's Bar & Grill	New deep freezer New glasswasher
10.	Billy's Burgers and Bar	New blender x 2 New fructose quantitative machine
11.	BJ Lyons & SW McFelin trading as Steve's Grill	New dishwasher
12.	Black Spoon (TAS) atf Project 5 Trust Trading as The Metz	New Point Of Sale system New freezer
13.	Boutique Espresso	New stoves Electrician labour Grease trap
14.	Bread + Butter	Purchase glass / bar dishwasher Ice maker machine
15.	Bright Future Restaurant and Entertainment Pty Ltd	Purchase Point Of Sale equipment Onsite installation and training Self ordering kiosk
16.	Burger Got Soul Sandy Bay	Glasswasher
17.	Burnie Central Townhouse Hotel	Purchase speaker system and amplifier
18.	Burnie RSL Sub Branch Inc.	Purchase meat slicer Purchase hot water unit Purchase cooking utensils
19.	Cake o'clock	New pizza oven
20.	Canton Restaurant	New benchtop fridges, stick blender, pizza oven and grill

21.	Cargo Bar Pizza Lounge	New kitchen food prep area and refrigeration Purchase cooling unit New kitchen tables and sinks Purchase kitchen flooring and ceiling and stainless-steel splash backs Purchase kitchen cooking appliances
22.	Cataract on Paterson	Purchase of deep fryer and installation
23.	Chopsticks Restaurant	New grillersPurchase cooktop
24.	Club Hotel Tas Pty Ltd	New coffee machine
25.	Craigie Knowe Vineyard	Upgrading property signage
26.	Criterion Street Cafe	Purchase new char grill and food processor
27.	Cultura Espresso Bar & Restaurant	New outdoor beer garden
28.	Dalton Cafe	New Point of Sale machine New outside dining
29.	Daves Noodles Mowbray	Revitalising back bar/function room (paint, new shelving) Painting bar ceiling
30.	Derby Hotel Tas Pty Ltd Trading as Dorset Hotel	New electrical outlets for kitchen New commercial dishwasher
31.	Derwent Valley Hospitality	Purchase and installation of 11 raised garden beds
32.	Dier Makr	Commercial marquee Outdoor gas heaters x 2 LED Lighting marquee
33.	Dr Coffee Collins St	New awning illuminated signage New menu screens (6 screens) New glass window Repair walk-in freezer
34.	DT & JL Cripps Bakery	Purchase of walk-in freezer
35.	Dumpling Express Pty Ltd Trading as Pot Sticker Dumpling House	Development of gift shop
36.	Dunn & Demanet Pty Ltd trading as The Agrarian Kitchen Eatery & Store	New bain-marie New awning illuminated signage New automatic sliding door
37.	Earthwater Cafe	Design and install new awning illuminated signage Replace damaged glass window New automatic sliding door
38.	Earthy Eats	Purchase of signage Purchase shipping container Purchase shade sail Purchase vessel
39.	Easternshore Food Tas Pty Ltd Trading as New Town Greenstore & Cafe	Construction of a roof and temporary walls
40.	Eb & Flo Pty Ltd	New dishwasher
41.	Excel Hospitality Pty Ltd as the Trustee for Bui Nguyen Uni Trust Tradng as Rhyme St Cafe Northgate	New kitchen equipment
42.	FBM Consulting trading as Sporties Hotel	New Point Of Sale system and room service system
43.	Felix James Holdings Pty Ltd	New glass washer New fridge

44.	Gatsu Gatsu	New high table seating New upholstered cushioning New tables and bench
45.	Gotcha House Eastlands	Purchase of commercial vinyl flooring Purchase commercial oven
46.	Grinners Dive Bar	New beer garden
47.	Harbour Lights Cafe	New outside dining decor New outside Dining Light and Heating
48.	Harosmeale Pty Ltd trading as Mr Burger Rosny	New wok burner
49.	Hobart Historic Cruises Pty Ltd	Purchase fridge Purchase bench top fryer Purchase ice machine
50.	Hometown Secret	Building of a food pass
51.	Hotel Bruny	New powered camping sites
52.	Hursey & Sons Pty Ltd Trading as Hursey Seafoods	New outdoor dining furniture and landscaping Website update
53.	Island Ventures Pty Ltd Trading as Legana Tavern	New coffee machine Improvements on outdoor dining area
54.	Jack Loves Red	Purchase bar refrigeration
55.	Jotham Samuel Jennings & Susanna Justine Knott	New fridge New dish washer
56.	Juice Bar Fifty Five	Purchase lighting Renovations for entry door of bar
57.	Jz Trading Tas Pty Ltd	New coffee bar
58.	Kings Bridge Bar and Restaurant	Purchase oven
59.	Last Rites Brewing Company Trading as Boodle Beasley	Outdoor renovation
60.	Lavelle Holdings Pty Ltd Trading as Mazbah	New fridge New dishwasher
61.	Lewisham Tavern	Outdoor renovation
62.	LIXU Pty Ltd	New windows New dining chairs
63.	Lovett Cafe	New Freezer New Fridge Extend dining capacity - new tables and chairs
64.	Low Head Pilot Station Seafood Shack	New glass washing area New dishwasher
65.	Luna Chan	Development of outdoor food and beverage area Refurbishment of guest rooms
66.	Marions Vineyard	New undercover dining
67.	Maydena Adventure Pty Ltd	New dough mixer
68.	Ming Court Restaurant	New exterior facade paintwork
69.	Mount Gnomon Farm	Marketing, content creation, digital upgrades, website upgrades, social media training
70.	Mr Burger Tasmania Pty Ltd	Purchase of hardwood furniture
71.	Mulan Chinese Restaurant	Purchase and install lighting facility entrance New branding signage Purchase and install new facility and roadside signage

72.	Murray Burnett Holdings Pty Ltd	New washer dryer Purchase ice cream machine Marketing campaign
73.	Nara Thai	Purchase solar panels
74.	Oakwood Industries Pty Ltd trading as Port Arthur Lavender and Tasmanian Chocolate Foundry	New oven and fryer
75.	Old Kempton Distillery	New commercial dishwasher New dish washer
76.	Olivers Bakery and Cafe	New canning room
77.	One88 on Collins	New glass washer
78.	Park Beach Cafe	Purchase umbrellas
79.	Pedros The Restaurant	New deep fryer New fridge
80.	Peony Pavilion Chinese Restaurant and Bar	Purchase coffee machines x 2
81.	Plenty Cider	New kitchen equipment New designs front of house
82.	Prem's Seafood Bar & Grill	Upgrade Point Of Sale system & training
83.	Prince of Wales Hotel	Purchase ice cream freezer Purchase food warmer cabinet Upgrade of display shelving, cabinets and baskets
84.	Puddleduck Vineyard Pty Ltd	Purchase new table numbering system Purchase x 2 iPads Staff training for new system
85.	Pyengana Pub Pty Ltd	New outdoor heating New tables and chairs New umbrellas
86.	QN-GM Pty Ltd Trading as Dave's Noodles Glenorchy	Revamp of menu including, menu consultant, new menu boards, menus & printing
87.	QT-NP Pty Ltd Trading as Dave's Noodles Moonah	New coffee grinder New filter water system New automatic tamper New milk fridge New business phone
88.	Quality Hotel Colonial Launceston & Three Steps on George	Purchase commercial oven New website Purchase food processing equipment Advertising, marketing, promotion
89.	Raincheck North Hobart Pty Ltd	Construction of an outdoor bar New outdoor lighting
90.	Reba Sear	New dishwasher
91.	Red Ruby Hospitality Pty Ltd	Purchase of pie and food warmer Purchase of wok Advertising, marketing, promotion
92.	Reel Fish and Chips	Purchase new freezer New dishwashing machine
93.	Replay Bar	Installation of new oven
94.	Richmond Bakery	Social media advertising New telephone system
95.	River Bend Estate Pty Ltd Trading as Tom McHugos Hobart Hotel	Upgrade Point Of Sale system/equipment Staff training x 2

96.	Riversdale Estate	Upgrade outdoor kitchen New electrical appliances
97.	Royal Thai	New uniforms New cookware New plates and bowls New coffee machine
98.	Rupert & Hound Pty Ltd	New Point Of Sale system New screen protection stands x 2 Purchase software licence (year)
99.	Rustic Bakehouse	New cookware New tables and chairs New coffee machine
100.	Sachie Cafe	New cooking equipment New fridge
101.	Saigon Express Vietnamese Street Food Kingston	New CCTV New fridge
102.	Salamanca Inn	Purchase of carpet
103.	Scottsdale Art Gallery Cafe	New gas cooker
104.	Seven Sheds Pty Ltd	New oven Upgraded benches New Fridge
105.	Simple Path Pty Ltd	New outdoor furniture New outdoor blinds
106.	Sisterhood	Upgrade of aquaponics, greenhouse and vegetable garden
107.	Slippervic Pty Ltd	New exhaust canopy, gas fittings, gas cooktop and chargrill
108.	Society Salamanca Pty Ltd	New oven x 2
109.	Stabla Hobart	Purchase of demountable staging equipment
110.	Suminato Japanese Restaurant	New dough/pastry sheeter/roller equipment
111.	Sunbear	Purchase new wok burner New paint, lights, dining tables
112.	T42 Hobart	New oven
113.	TA Unmack & S Wilson	New beer system
114.	Tahune Adventures	New stainless sink and bench, rangehood, fridge and signage
115.	Tasty Buns Pty Ltd	Purchase glassware, tableware and equipment
116.	The Arcade Bar Pty Ltd	New wine shelves New glass washer New under bench fridge
117.	the artHouse New Norfolk	New door and divider
118.	The Beach House	Purchase ice shaver machine Purchase bar cocktail equipment Purchase alcohol display shelving New outdoor seating set New table and chairs Rebranding marketing strategy New external signage New deep fryer

119.	The Brown Bear Eatery	New refrigeration New rice cooker New dicing equipment New shelves New tables and chairs
120.	The Devil's Own Ice Creamery	New bench fridge New dish washer
121.	The Foreshore Tasmania	Repair of rangehood Advertising
122.	The Fresh Connection your healthy food choice	Purchase fridge New stove Purchase freezer
123.	The Gourmet Space	New dishwasher New fridge
124.	The Kentish Tasmania	Additional Point Of Sale Terminal with receipt printer and cash drawer Additional fridge
125.	The Marrawah Inn Pty Ltd	New oven
126.	The Pontville Crown Inn	New oven
127.	The Prickly Cactus	New electricity supply
128.	The Richmond Arms Hotel	New menu boards Upgrade of catering website Staff training
129.	The Salty Dog Hotel	New flooring New lighting
130.	The Trustee for Samuel Pepys Cafe Unit Trust	New website ordering platform and training
131.	The Trustee for Victory Enterprises Trust Trading as Miners Gold Brewery	New fridge New coffee machine New lantern
132.	The Waterfront Wynyard	New IT sale system and staff training New light box signage New bench top griddle
133.	The Welcome Swallow Brewery	New gas fryer
134.	Thylacine Industries Pty Ltd Trading As Don Mario's Ristorante & Coffee Lounge	New fridge New stand mixer
135.	Time Out Cafe Pty Ltd	Training course New coffee machine New air conditioner Purchase chest freezer
136.	Tin Timbers	Purchase convection oven Purchase commercial slushie machine
137.	Tippett Family Trust Trading as Amor Bar	Upgrade of Point of Sale equipment Upgrade of Wi-Fi access
138.	Tricycle Cafe and Bar	Remodelling of counter area New dining equipment New dining area renovation
139.	Trocadero Cafe	Installation of new outdoor lights Purchase new fridge
140.	Trunghan Pty Ltd trading as Saigon Kitchen LCT	New kitchen cool room
141.	TT-MMG Pty Ltd Trading as Sault Cafe	New grill

142.	Turners Beach Berry Patch	New grill
143.	Wandering Trout Pty Ltd	Purchase fridge New furniture, wall and floor
144.	Wang and Xiao Pty Ltd	New gas oven Purchase glass on the front door
145.	Waterfalls Cafe & Gallery	New flooring
146.	Wattlebanks Catering	New toilet block Purchase covered platform deck
147.	White Box Noodles	New convection oven New Fryer New outside tables and outside chairs
148.	Winter Brook Vineyard	New glass doors and heating
149.	Yoolo Pty Ltd	New fridge
150.	Zero Davey Boutique Apartment Hotel & Zero Davey Cafe & Catering	New tables and chairs

APPENDIX 2

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No. 21 of 2023 House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Michelle O'Byrne MP

ANSWERED BY: Minister the Hon Roger Jaensch MP

QUESTION:

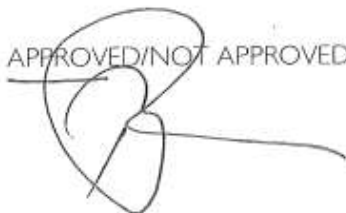
Ms O'Byrne to ask the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs with regard to Aboriginal members of the Tasmanian State Service - Are there any staff that identify as Aboriginal, and if so, how many disaggregated by:

- (a) agency and division;
- (b) classification level; and
- (c) location? (26 October 2022)

ANSWER:

The answer to this question will be included in the response to Question No. 19 of 2023 from the Premier, the Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP, in his capacity as Minister responsible for the *State Service Act 2000*.

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED



The Hon Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

Date: 10/5/23

APPENDIX 3

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No. 12 of 2022

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Hon Michelle O'Byrne MP

ANSWERED BY: Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management,
Hon Felix Ellis MP

QUESTION:

1. Are there any vacant positions across the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, and if so, in what areas? (25 August 2022)?
2. Has the Department reviewed and subsequently altered establishment numbers, and if so, in what areas?
3. Has the Vacancy Management Committee determined a position is not be filled, and if so, on how many occasions and which positions were they?

ANSWERS:

1. There were 72 vacancies across DPFEM at 28 February 2023.

Vacancies by area:		
Business and Executive Services	People and Business Services	12
	Project Unify	1
	Strategic Projects	4
	Strategy and Support	3
	Technology and Innovation	10
	Wellbeing Support	1
	Total	31

Tasmania Police	Crime and Intelligence Command	1
	Northern District	3
	Ops Support District	1
	Southern District	5
	Special Response & CTU	2
	Western District	4
	Office of the Commissioner	2
	Total	18
TFS	Community Fire Safety	13*
	Office of the Chief Officer	2
	North West Region	1
	State Operations	4
	Total	20
SES	Total	3

* The majority of these vacancies exist due to the creation of new positions, reflecting growth in the division, or career progression of previous incumbents within the broader state service.

Note: This data does not include sworn officers. At 27 April 2023, Tasmania Police had an allocated strength of 1368 sworn officers, which will increase to 1409 by 1 July 2023. Firefighter vacancies are included in TFS figures.

2. There have been no significant changes to base establishment numbers in DPFEM. Minor changes may occur to ensure appropriate allocation and distribution of staff across the Department, which is consistent with good governance (excludes sworn officers and frontline operational roles).
3. The Vacancy Management Committee (VMC) was reinstated on 15 July 2022. The VMC only considers State Service vacancies and not sworn police or operational firefighter roles. Since being reinstated, the VMC has not made a decision to not fill a vacancy.

☒ APPROVED ☐ NOT APPROVED



The Hon Felix Ellis MP

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management

Date: 9/5/2023